

A RECOVERY READER

A GUIDE FOR SPONSORS, STUDENTS & TEACHERS



SELECTED WRITINGS FROM
60 YEARS
OF 12-STEP RELATED
ARTICLES, ESSAYS, &
PERSONAL EXPERIENCE

ANONYMOUSREVIEW.ORG

A Recovery Reader

**Studies in AA, the Steps and
the Process of the Program**

FIRST EDITION
MARCH 2011

reader.anonymousreview.org

Published in Cooperation with Oak & Lotus Publication

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'Mazing Adveners (formerly Adventures in Sponsorship) appear on the anonymousreview.org website and is published here for the first time.

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Published by anonymousreview.org, Raleigh, NC
in cooperation with Oak & Lotus Publications

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Published by anonymousreview.org
March 2011 Revision 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

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*Portions of this book have been reprinted in Sponsor Magazine.
sponsormagazine.org*

WARNING: Travel beyond this point without a Sponsor is not advised.

Intent of This Book

This book is intended to be used:

- a) to serve as a personal enrichment course-in-a-book on Recovery and AA History.
- b) for a Sponsor who shares this information with someone they are attempting to help.
- c) to create a new class as appropriate to your area's needs and opportunity by taking the suggestions and materials to assemble or revise as you see fit.

It is not presented as the “only” way to do the work of sharing the Program, but is synthesis of work by over thirty authors over the past half century plus of effective AA recovery.

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Carrying the Message

Over the years, tens of thousands of recovering alcoholics have researched, distilled, and interpreted the lore of Recovery.

The purpose of this section is to provide the student, sponsors, or would-be teachers of the aspects of Recovery to a newcomer.

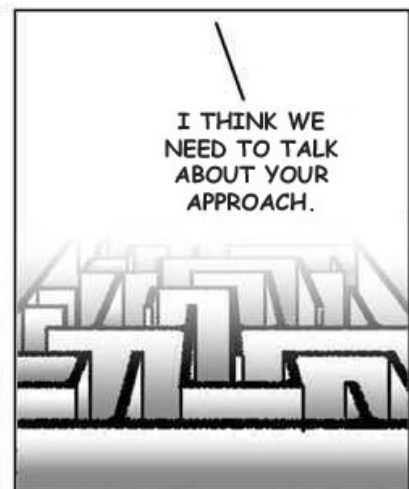
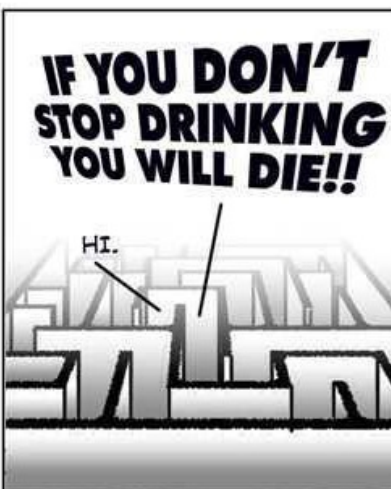
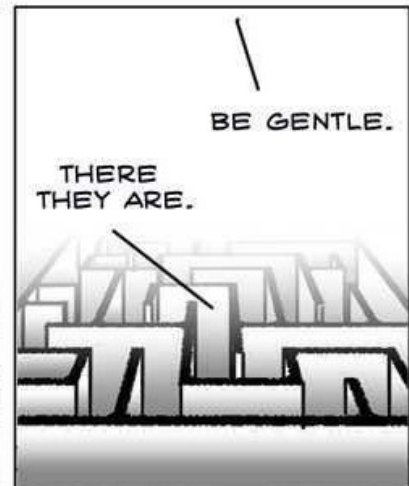
We are all newcomers. Every day is a new country we have not explored before. Time in recovery may give us experience that may help us, but we continue to require the honesty, open mindedness, willingness, and humility we needed at the beginning.

Take what you need and leave the rest.

MAZEING RECOVERY

WORKING WITH OTHERS

BY JOE A.



AA Chronology

This list has been drawn from many sources and is offered for general references.

July 22, 1877 – William Duncan Silkworth is born in Brooklyn, NY.

August 8, 1879 – Dr. Bob born in St. Johnsbury, VT.

March 21, 1881 – Anne R, Dr. Bob's wife, is born.

January 2, 1889 – Sister Ignatia, born Ballyhane, Ireland.

August 15, 1890 – E M Jellinek is born, author of "The Disease Concept of Alcoholism" and the "Jellinek Curve".

March 4, 1891 – Lois W is born.

December 27, 1893 – Rev Samuel Shoemaker is born.

November 26, 1895 – Bill W born in East Dorsett, VT.

March 25, 1898 – Jim B ("The Vicious Cycle") is born.

October 15, 1904 – Marty M, early AA woman, is born in Chicago.

February 1908 – Bill makes boomerang.

January 25, 1915 – Dr. Bob marries Anne Ripley.

January 24, 1918 – Bill marries Lois Burnham in the Swedenborg Church in Brooklyn Heights.

February 15, 1918 – Sue Smith Windows, Dr. Bob's adopted daughter, is born.

May 1919 – Bill returns home from service.

October 20, 1928 – Bill writes promise to Lois in family Bible to quit drinking. By Thanksgiving adds second promise.

January 1929 – Bill W. writes third promise in Bible to quit drinking.

September, 1930 – Bill writes 4th (last) promise in family Bible to quit drinking.

August 1934 – Rowland H and Cebra persuade court to parole Ebby T. to them.

November 1934 – Ebby T. carries message to Bill.

November 11, 1934 – Armistice Day; Bill starts drinking after dry spell, beginning of Bill's last drunk.

December 1934 – Bill & Lois start attending Oxford Group meetings.

December 11, 1934 – Bill admitted to Towns Hosp 4th/last time (fall '33, '34 in summer, midsummer, and final admittance). Bill's last drink is one beer he brought with him to Towns.

December 12, 1934 – Bill has Spiritual Experience at Towns Hospital.

December 13 or 14, 1934 – Ebby visits Bill at hospital, brings William James's book, "Varieties of Religious Experience".

December 1934 to May 1935 – Bill works with alcoholics, but fails to sober any of them. Lois reminds him HE is sober.

April 1935 – Dr. Silkworth tells Bill to quit preaching at drunks & tell them of obsession & allergy.

May 11, 1935 – Bill W. makes calls from the Mayflower Hotel and is referred to Dr. Bob.

May 12, 1935 @ 5 pm – Bill W. meets Dr. Bob at the home of Henrietta Seiberling.

June 10, 1935 – The date that is celebrated as Dr. Bob's last drink and the official founding date of AA. There is some evidence that the founders, in trying to reconstruct the history, got the date wrong and it was actually June 17.

June 26, 1935 – Bill Dotson. (AA #3) enters Akron's City Hospital for his last detox and his first day of sobriety.

June 28, 1935 – Dr. Bob and Bill Wilson visits Bill Dotson at Akron's City Hospital.

October 17, 1935 – Ebby T., Bill's sponsor, moves in with Bill and Lois.

December 1955 – 'Man on the Bed' painting by Robert M. first appears in Grapevine. Painting originally called 'Came to Believe'.

March 1936 – AA has ten members staying sober. At end of 1936, AA has 15 members.

October 1936 – Bill C., a Canadian alchy staying at Bill's house, commits suicide using a gas stove.

November 1936 – Fitz M. leaves Towns Hospital to become 'AA #3 in NY', with Bill W. and Hank P.

January 15, 1937 – Fitz M. brings AA meetings to Washington DC.

February 11, 1937 – First New Jersey meeting is held at the home of Hank P. ("The Unbeliever" in the first edition). Some sources report this as happening February 13, 1937.

September 13, 1937 – Florence R., 1st female in AA in NY.

November 1937 – Bill and Dr. Bob compare notes in Akron; count forty cases staying sober. The meeting of the Akron Group considers Bill's ideas for how to expand the movement ... a book, AA hospitals, paid missionaries. It passed by a majority of 2.

December 12, 1937 – Bill meets with Rockefeller Foundation and tries to get money.

December 13, 1937 – Rockland State Mental Hospital takes patients to meeting in New Jersey.

February 11, 1938 – Clarence S. ("Home Brewmeister" 1st-3rd edition) sobriety date.

March-May 1938 – Bill begins writing the book Alcoholics Anonymous. Works Publishing Inc. established to support writing and printing of book.

April 11, 1938 – The Alcoholic Foundation is formed as a trusteeship for AA (sometimes reported as May 1938).

May 1, 1939 – Bank forecloses on 182 Clinton Street. (sometimes reported as April 26, 1939).

June 16, 1938 – Jim Burwell, "The Vicious Cycle" in Big Book, has his last drink.

June 24, 1938 – Two Rockefeller associates tells the press about the Big Book "Not to bear any author's name but to be by 'Alcoholics Anonymous.'"

August 11, 1938 – Akron & NY members begin writing stories for Big Book.

July 15 1938 – 1st documented use of name Alcoholics Anonymous, AA archives letter Bill to Willard Richardson.

July 18 1938 – In letter to Dr. Richards at Johns Hopkins, Bill uses Alcoholics Anonymous as working title for Big Book & name for the fellowship.

September 21, 1938 – Bill W. & Hank P. form Works Publishing Co.

December 1938 – Twelve Steps is written.

January 1939 – 400 copies of manuscript of Big Book is circulated for comment, evaluation, and sale.

January 3, 1939 – First sale of Works Publishing Co. stock is recorded.

January 8, 1938 – New York AA splits from the Oxford Group.

February 1939 – Dr. Harry Tiebout, 1st psychiatrist endorses AA and uses in his practice.

February 1939 – Dr. Howard of Montclair, NJ suggests swapping "you musts" for "we ought" in the Big Book.

February 5, 1939 – Dr. Bob tells Ruth Hock in a letter that AA has "to get away from the Oxford Group atmosphere".

March 1, 1939 – Readers Digest fails to write article on AA.

April 1, 1939 – Publication date of Alcoholics Anonymous, AA's Big Book.

April 10, 1939 – The first ten copies of the Big Book arrives at the office Bill and Hank P. shared.

April 24, 1989 – Dr. Leonard Strong dies.

April 25, 1939 – Morgan R. interviewed on Gabriel Heatter radio show.

April 26 or May 1, 1939 – Bank forecloses on 182 Clinton Street.

May 1939 – Lois W. Home Replacement Fund starts at Alcoholic Foundation.

May 6, 1939 – Clarence S. of Cleveland tells Dr. Bob, his sponsor, he will not go back to Oxford Group meetings in Akron and will start an "AA" meeting in Cleveland.

May 10, 1939 – Clarence S. announces to the Akron Oxford Group members that the Cleveland members are starting a meeting in Cleveland and calling it Alcoholics Anonymous.

May 11, 1939 – First group to officially call itself Alcoholics Anonymous meets at Abby G.'s house in Cleveland (some sources say the 18th).

June 7, 1939 – Bill and Lois Wilson have an argument, the first of two times Bill almost slipped.

June 25, 1939 – The New York Times reviewer writes that the Big Book is "more soundly based psychologically than any other treatment I have ever come upon."

July 1939 – Warren C. joined AA Cleveland, causes debate because he was not hospitalized.

July 4, 1939 – 1st AA meeting starts in Flatbush, NY.

July 14, 1939 – Dr. Tiebout gives Big Book to Marty M. who promptly throws it back at him.

August 1939 – Dr. Bob wrote & may have signed article for Faith magazine.

August 16, 1939 – Dr. Bob and Sister Ignatia admit 1st alcoholic to St. Thomas Hospital, Akron, Ohio.

September 1, 1939 – 1st AA group founded in Chicago by Earl T.

September 30, 1939 – Article in Liberty magazine, "Alcoholics and God" by Morris Markey.

October 1939 – 1st central committee formed in Cleveland; 1st example AA rotation.

October 14, 1939 – Journal of American Medical Association gives Big Book unfavorable review.

October 21, 1939 – Cleveland Plain Dealer begins series of articles on AA of by Elrick Davis.

November/December 1939 – Akron group withdrawals from association with Oxford Group. Meetings moved from T. Henry & Clarence Williams to Dr. Bob and other members' homes.

November 13, 1939 – Bill wants to go to work at Towns Hosp, NY. Drunks want him to stay on as head of the movement.

November 21, 1939 – AA's in San Francisco hold 1st California AA meeting in the Clift Hotel.

November 26, 1939 – Dilworth Lupton gave sermon "Mr. X and Alcoholics Anonymous". It becomes one of first pamphlets on AA.

November 28, 1939 – Hank P. writes Bill advocating autonomy for all AA groups.

December 1939 – First AA group in mental institution, Rockland State Hospital, NY.

December 1939 – 1st home meeting in Los Angeles at Kaye M.'s house.

December 1939 – Matt Talbot Club has 88 members, uses wagons to collect old furniture to recondition & sell, not AA, uses AA program material, marked 1st effort reach alcoholics outside married middle-class category.

December 6, 1939 – Bert the Tailor lends Works Publishing \$1000.

January 4, 1940 – 1st AA group formed in Detroit, Michigan.

January 10, 1940 – 1st AA meeting not in a home meets at King School, Akron, Ohio.

February 1940 – 1st AA clubhouse opens at 334-1/2 West 24th Street, NYC.

February 8, 1940 – Rockefeller dinner.

February 8, 1940 – Houston Press runs first of six anonymous articles on AA by Larry J.

February 28, 1940 – First organization meeting of Philadelphia AA is held at McCreedy Huston's room at 2209 Delancy Street.

March 1940 – Mort J. comes to LA from Denver; starts custom of reading Chapter 5 Big Book at Cecil group.

March 7, 1940 – Bill and Lois visits the Philadelphia AA group. Any drunk who wants to get well was more than welcome at the AA meeting at 115 Newbury St., at 8 PM Wednesdays.

March 16, 1940 – Alcoholic Foundation & Works Publishing move from Newark to 30 Vesey St. in lower Manhattan. First headquarters of our own.

April 1, 1940 – Larry J. of Houston, writes "The Texas Prayer", used to open AA meetings in Texas.

April 16, 1940 – A sober Rollie H. catches the only opening day no-hitter in baseball history since 1909.

April 19, 1940 – The first AA group in Little Rock, Arkansas, is formed. First 'mail order' group.

April 22, 1940 – Bill and Hank transfer their Works Publishing stock to the Alcoholic Foundation.

April 23, 1940 – Dr. Bob writes the Trustees to refuse Big Book royalties, but Bill W. insists that Dr. Bob and Anne receive them.

April 24, 1940 – The first AA pamphlet, "AA", is published.

May 1, 1940 – Rollie H., Cleveland Indians, first anonymity break on national level.

May 4, 1940 – Sunday Star reports founding of first AA group in Washington, DC.

June 5, 1940 – Ebby Thatcher takes a job at the NY World's Fair.

June 6, 1940 – The first AA Group in Richmond, VA, is formed.

June 15, 1940 – First AA Group in Baltimore, MD, is formed.

June 18, 1940 – One hundred attends the first meeting in the first AA clubhouse at 334-1/2 West 24th St., New York City.

July 7, 1940 – Bill attends 1st Summer Session at School of Alcohol Studies at Yale University.

July 8, 1940 – 1st AA Group is formed in Dayton, Ohio.

July 23, 1940 – Philly AAs send 10% of kitty to Alcoholic Foundation, sets precedent.

September, 1940 – AA group is started in Toledo by Duke P. & others.

September, 1940 – Journal of Nervous and Mental Diseases gives Big Book unfavorable review.

September 24, 1940 – Bill 12th steps Bobbie V., who later replaced Ruth Hock as his secretary in NY.

November 10, 1940 – 1st AA group is formed in Minneapolis.

November 12, 1940 – 1st AA meeting is held in Boston.

November 14, 1940 – Alcoholic Foundation publishes 1st AA Bulletin.

December 1940 – 1st AA group is formed in St. Louis, Missouri.

December 1940 – Group is started in Ashtabula, Ohio due to Plain Dealer articles. AA Cleveland has about 30 groups.

December 1, 1940 – Chicago Daily Tribune begins a series of articles on AA by Nall Hamilton.

February 15, 1941 – Baltimore Sunday Sun reports that the city's first AA group, begun in June 1940, has grown from 3 to 40 members.

February 20, 1941 – The Toledo Blade publishes first of three articles on AA by Seymour Rothman.

March 1941 – Second printing of Big Book.

March 1941 – 1st Prison AA Group is formed at San Quentin.

March 1, 1941 – Jack Alexander's Saturday Evening Post article is published and membership jumps from 2,000 to 8,000 by years end.

March 7, 1941 – Boston newspaper reports that any drunk who wanted can attend that city's first AA meeting.

March 9, 1941 – Wichita Beacon reports AA member from NY who wants to form a group in Wichita.

March 15, 1941 – 1st AA group is formed in New Haven, Connecticut. Not reported in paper until Oct 1, 1941.

April 3, 1941 – First AA meeting is held in Florida.

April 7, 1941 – Ruth Hock reports there are 1,500 letters asking for help as a result of the Saturday Evening Post Article by Jack Alexander.

April 11, 1941 – Bill and Lois finally find a home, Stepping Stones in New Bedford.

April 19, 1941 – The first AA group in the State of Washington is formed in Seattle.

May 1, 1941 – The first Wisconsin AA meeting is held at a hotel in Milwaukee.

May 2, 1941 – Jacksonville, FL newspaper reports the start of an AA group in Jacksonville.

May 3, 1941 – The first AA group in New Orleans, Louisiana, is formed (sometimes dated as May 2, 1943).

May 3, 1941 – Democrat Chronicle in Rochester, NY, reports first annual AA dinner at Seneca hotel with 60 attending.

May 16, 1941 – Ruth Hock finds that Joe Worth (former publisher of the New Yorker) is credited in Hank Parkhurst's diaries with coming up with the name Alcoholics Anonymous, has a "wet brain".

June 7, 1941 – The first AA Group in St. Paul, Minnesota, is formed.

June 8, 1941 – Three AAs start a group in Kalamazoo, Michigan.

June 30, 1941 – Ruth Hock shows Bill Wilson the Serenity Prayer and it is adopted readily by AA.

July 10, 1941 – Texas newspaper publishes anonymous letter from founding member of Texas AA Group. (Larry J)

July 20, 1941 – First AA group is formed in Seattle, Washington.

August 1941 – 1st meeting in Orange County, California is held in Anaheim.

August 19, 1941 – 1st AA Meeting in Colorado is held in Denver.

September 13, 1941 – WHJP in Jacksonville, FL airs Spotlight on AA.

October 1, 1941 – Local news reports 1st AA Group in New Haven, CT.

October 6, 1941 – 900 dine at Cleveland dinner for Dr. Bob.

November 1941 – "First Mass AA Meeting" in Oklahoma City, 8 present.

December 11, 1941 – Dallas Morning News reports 1st AA group is formed in Dallas.

February 1 or 2, 1942 – Ruth Hock, AA's 1st paid secretary, resigns to get married.

May 17, 1942 – *The Dayton Journal Herald* publishes pictures of AA members wearing masks to protect their anonymity.

May 17, 1942 – New Haven, CT paper has article on AA. Picture shows faces of members sitting in a circle.

June 17, 1942 – New York AA groups sponsors the first annual NY area meeting. Four hundred and twenty-four hear Dr. Silkworth and AA speakers.

June 19, 1942 – Columnist Earl Wilson reports that NYC Police Chief Valentine sent six policemen to AA and they sobered up. "There are fewer suicides in my files," he comments.

October 1942 – 1st issue of Cleveland Central Bulletin is published.

January 1, 1943 – Columbus Dispatch reports 1st Anniversary of Columbus, Ohio Central Group.

January 19, 1943 – 1st discussion for starting AA group in Toronto.

February 18, 1943 – During gas rationing in WWII, AAs are granted the right to use cars for 12th step work in emergency cases.

March 29, 1943 – *The Charleston Mail*, WV, reports on Bill W.'s talk at St. John's Parish House.

May 8, 1943 – Akron AA Group celebrates 8th anniversary with 500 present and sober.

July 23, 1943 – New Haven CT Register reports arrival of AAs to study with E. M. Jellinek.

July 24, 1943 – LA press reports formation of all-Mexican AA Group.

August 1, 1943 – Washington Times-Herald (DC) reports on AA clubhouse; to protect anonymity withholds address.

August 9, 1943 – LA groups announce 1000 members in 11 groups.

October 10, 1943 – 6 of 1st 9 AA's attend clubhouse anniversary in Toledo.

October 24, 1943 – Wilson starts 1st major AA tour, returns Jan 19, 1944.

November 28, 1943 – Bill guest speaker at San Quentin Penitentiary (sometimes dated Dec 2, 1943).

January 1944 – Dr. Harry Tiebout's first paper on the subject of Alcoholics Anonymous.

January 19, 1944 – Wilson's returns from 1st major AA tour started in Oct 24 1943.

March 10, 1944 – New York Intergroup is established.

July 1944 – Bob writes article for Grapevine "On Cultivating Tolerance".

June 21, 1944 – The first Issue of the AA Grapevine is published.

October 1944 – First non-American branch started in Sydney, Australia by Father T. V. Dunlea & Rex.

October 2, 1944 – Marty M. founded National Committee Education Alcoholism, later becomes National Council on Alcoholism.

January 15, 1945 – First AA meeting is held in Springfield, Missouri.

January 24, 1945 – 1st black group St. Louis.

March 5, 1945 – Time Magazine reports Detroit radio broadcasts of AA members (Archie T.).

June 11, 1945 – 2500 attend AA's 10th Anniversary in Cleveland, Ohio.

June 13, 1945 – Morgan R. gives a radio appearance for AA with large audience. He is kept under surveillance to make sure he doesn't drink.

October 3, 1945 – AA Grapevine is adopted as national publication of AA.

November 1945 – Bill's article called 'Those Goof Balls' is published in Grapevine.

December 20, 1945 – Rowland H. dies (he carried the Oxford Group message to Ebby).

January 1946 – Readers Digest does a story on AA.

March 1946 – The March of Time film is produced by NY AA office.

May 6, 1946 – The long form of the "Twelve Traditions" is published in the AA Grapevine.

September, 1946 – Bill & Dr. Bob both publicly endorse National Committee Education Alcoholism founded by Marty M.

September, 1946 – 1st AA group in Mexico.

November 18, 1946 – 1st Dublin Ireland group meets.

March 31, 1947 – 1st AA group is formed in London, England.

September 18, 1947 – Dallas Central Office opens its doors.

October 13, 1947 – "The Melbourne Group" holds its first meeting in Australia.

November 1, 1947 – 1st AA Group in Anchorage, Alaska.

January 1948 – 1st AA meeting in Japan.

June, 1948 – A subscription to the AA Grapevine is donated to the Beloit, Wisconsin Public Library by a local AA member.

September, 1948 – Bob writes article for Grapevine on AA "Fundamentals – In Retrospect".

December 1948 – Dr. Bob's last major talk, in Detroit.

March 1949 – Dr. Bob considers idea of AA conference premature.

March 11, 1949 – The Calix Society, an association of Roman Catholic alcoholics who are maintaining their sobriety through participation in Alcoholics Anonymous, is formed in Minneapolis by five Catholic AA members.

May 1949 – The first AA meetings in Scotland are held in Glasgow and Edinburgh.

June 1, 1949 – Anne Smith, Dr. Bob's wife, dies.

September, 1949 – 1st issue of Grapevine is published in "pocketbook" size.

November 15, 1949 – Bill W. suggests that groups devote Thanksgiving week to discussions of the 12 Traditions.

December 7, 1949 – Sister Ignatia receives Poverello Medal on behalf of AA.

April 1950 – Saturday Evening Post article "The Drunkard's Best Friend" by Jack Alexander.

May 1950 – Nell Wing becomes Bill W.'s secretary.

May 1951 – Al-Anon is founded by Lois W. and Anne B.

May 18, 1950 – Dr. Bob tells Bill "I reckon we ought to be buried like other folks" after hearing that local AAs want a huge memorial.

July 28-30, 1950 – First AA International Convention is held in Cleveland, Ohio. Twelve Traditions are adopted. Dr. Bob makes last appearance at large AA gathering.

November 16, 1950 – Dr. Bob dies.

December 1950 – Grapevine article signed by both Bill and Dr. Bob recommend establishing AA General Service Conference.

January 1951 – AA Grapevine publishes memorial issue for Dr. Bob.

February 1951 – Fortune magazine article about AA New York reprints in pamphlet form for many years.

March 1951 – American Weekly publishes memorial article for Dr. Bob.

March 22, 1951 – Dr. William Duncan Silkworth dies at Towns Hospital.

April 25, 1951 – AA's first General Service Conference is held.

October 1951 – Lasker Award is given to AA by American Public Health Association.

October 1951 – Sister Ignatia writes "Care of Alcoholics – St. Thomas Hospital & AA Started Movement Which Swept Country" article in "Hospital Progress," the journal of Catholic Hospital Association. In October 1954 – The "Alcoholic Foundation" is renamed the "General Service Board of AA"

November 21, 1952 – Willard Richardson, past Treasurer/Chairman of Alcoholic Foundation, dies.

January 21, 1954 – Hank P. who helped Bill start NY office dies in Pennington, New Jersey.

August 3, 1954 – Brinkley S. gets sober at Towns Hosp after 50th detox.

August 28, 1954 – "24 Hours a Day" is published by Richmond W.

September 17, 1954 – Bill D., AA #3 dies.

July 2-3, 1955 – 20th Anniversary Convention at St. Louis, MO. The Three Legacies of Recovery, Unity, and Service, is turned over to the movement by the old-timers. AA comes of Age.

October 1, 1957 – Book "AA Comes of Age" is published.

January 1958 – Bill writes article for Grapevine on "Emotional Sobriety".

April 1958 – The word "honest" is dropped from AA Preamble, "an honest desire to stop drinking".

February 23, 1959 – AA is granted "Recording for the Blind" permission to tape the Big Book.

April 3, 1960 – Fr. Ed Dowling, S.J., dies. He was Bill W's "spiritual sponsor."

July 1-3, 1960 – 25th Anniversary of AA in Long Beach, CA.

July 11, 1960 – Time publishes article called "Passionately Anonymous" on the 25th Convention.

January 30, 1961 – Dr. Carl Jung answers Bill's letter with "Spiritus Contra Spiritum".

September, 1962 – 1st appearance of Victor E. in Grapevine.

February 1963 – Harpers carries article critical of AA.

November 1, 1963 – Reverend Sam Shoemaker dies.

July 2, 1965 – "Best of Bill" and Pocket-Sized "12 and 12" is first sold.

July 2, 1965 – 1st "La Vigne", Canadian Grapevine, is published.

July 2-4, 1965 – 30th Anniversary of AA in Toronto. Adopts "I Am Responsible."

July 16, 1965 – Frank Amos, AA Non-Alcoholic Trustee, dies.

September 19, 1965 – The Saturday Evening Post publishes article "Alcoholics Can Be Cured – Despite AA".

March 21 1966 – Ebby dies.

April 1966 – Change in ratio of trustees of the General Service Board; now two-thirds (majority) are alcoholic.

April 1, 1966 – Sister Ignatia dies.

April 2, 1966 – Dr. Harry Tiebout dies.

November 9, 1966 – President Johnson appoints Marty M. to the 1st National Advisory Committee on Alcoholism.

February 19, 1967 – Father "John Doe" (Ralph P.), 1st Catholic Priest in AA dies.

October, 9-11, 1969 – 1st World Service meeting is held in New York with delegates from 14 countries.

April 1970 – GSO is moved to 468 Park Ave. South, NYC.

July 3-5, 1970 – 35th Anniversary of AA in Miami. "Declaration of Unity". Bill's last public appearance.

October 10, 1970 – Lois reads "Bills Last Message" at annual dinner in NY.

January 24, 1971 – Bill W. dies at Miami Beach, FL.

January 26, 1971 – New York Times publishes Bill's obituary on page 1.

February 14, 1971 – AA groups worldwide hold memorial service for Bill W.

May 8, 1971 – Bill W. is buried in private ceremony, East Dorset, Vermont.

July 31, 1972 – Rollie H. dies sober in Washington DC.

October 5-7, 1972 – 2nd World Service meeting is held in New York.

April 16, 1973 – Dr. Jack Norris presents President Nixon with the one millionth copy of the Big Book.

October 24, 1973 – *Trustee's Archives Committee of AA at its first meeting*

May 28, 1974 – *The first World Service Meeting of AA outside North America is held in London.*

July 4-6, 1975 – *40th Anniversary of AA in Denver. World's largest coffee server serves half million cups a day.*

September 19, 1975 – *Jack Alexander, author of original Saturday Evening Post article, dies.*

December 10, 1975 – *Birds of a Feather AA group for pilots is formed.*

June 6, 1979 – *AA gives the two millionth copy of the Big Book to Joseph Califano, then Secretary of Health, Education, and Welfare. It is presented by Lois Wilson, Bill's wife, in New York.*

December 6, 1979 – *Akron Beacon reports death of Henrietta Sieberling.*

May 29, 1980 – *"Dr. Bob and the Good Oldtimers" is published.*

July 3-6, 1980 – *45th Anniversary of AA in New Orleans. First true marathon meeting is held.*

July 3-6, 1980 – *Gay AAs have own program at 40th AA Anniversary in New Orleans.*

July 22, 1980 – *Marty M. early AA woman and founder of NCADD dies.*

August 1981 – *Distribution of Alcoholics Anonymous passes 3 million.*

December 1982 – *Nell Wing retires from GSO after 35 years of service.*

March 22, 1984 – *Clarence S., "Home Brewmeister", dies.*

December 5, 1985 – *Dave B., founder of Montreal Group dies weeks before 50th anniversary. His story is added to the 4th Edition Big Book.*

January 23, 1985 – *Bob B. dies sober November 11, 2001.*

July 5-7, 1985 – *50th AA Anniversary in Montreal, Canada. Ruth Hock is given 5,000,000th Big Book. House of Seagrams flies their flags at half-mast for 3 days.*

January 13, 1988 – *Dr. Jack Norris Chairman/Trustee of AA for 27 years dies.*

August 18, 1988 – *1st Canadian National AA Convention in Halifax, Nova Scotia.*

October 5, 1988 – *Lois Burnam Wilson dies.*

October 8, 1988 – *Memorial Service for Lois W. at Stepping Stones, NY.*

October 10, 1988 – *Lois is buried next to Bill in Manchester, Vermont.*

April 30, 1989 – *Film "My Name is Bill W." a Hallmark presentation is broadcast on ABC TV.*

July 5-8, 1990 – *55th AA Anniversary in Seattle, WA. Nell Wing given 10,000,000th Big Book.*

July 2, 1993 – *50 years of AA is celebrated in Canada.*

Oct 28, 1994 – *National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence celebrates 50 years.*

January 19, 1999 – *Frank M., AA Archivist since 1983, dies peacefully in his sleep.*

February 14, 2000 – *William Y., "California Bill" dies in Winston Salem, NC.*

May 19, 2000 – *Dr. Paul O., Big Book story "Doctor, Alcoholic, Addict" (renamed "Acceptance Was the Answer" in the 4th edition) dies at the age of 83.*

June, 2000 – *More than 47,000 from 87 countries attend the opening meeting of the 65th AA Anniversary in Minneapolis, MN.*

July 2, 2000 – *20 millionth copy of Big Book is given to Al-Anon in Minneapolis, MN.*

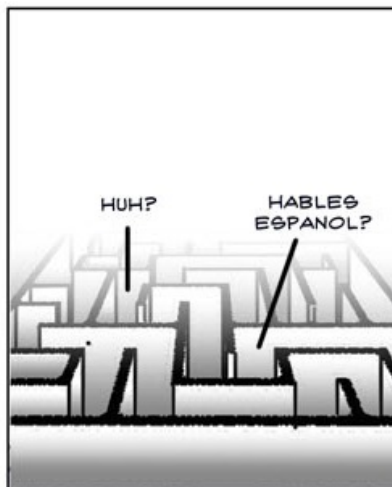
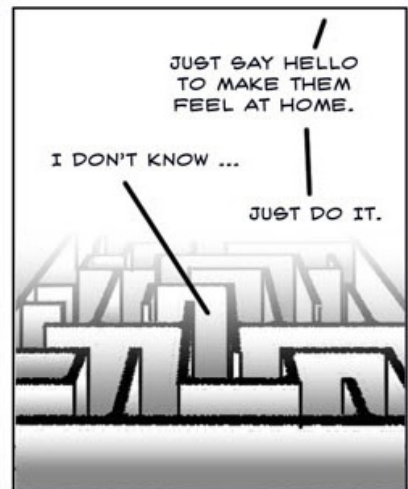
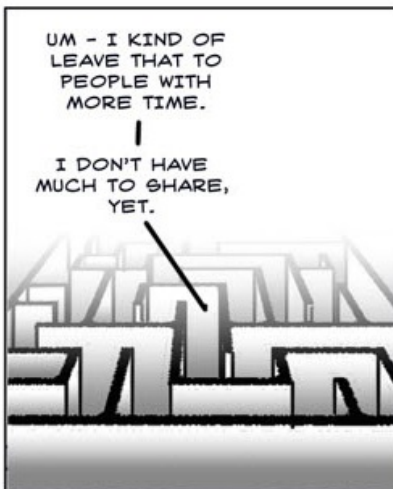
January 5, 2001 – *Chuck C. from Houston dies sober in Texas at 38 years sober.*

September 11, 2001 – *30 Vesey St, New York, location of AA's first office is destroyed during the World Trade Center attack.*

MAZEING RECOVERY

MORE DIRECTION

BY JOE A.



Fort Worth, Texas, 6/12/54

How the Big Book Was Put Together

A TALK BY BILL WILSON

I think I'm on the bill for tonight's show with a talk on the 12 Traditions of AA. But you know drunks, like women, have the prerogative, or at least seize the prerogative of changing their minds - I'm not going to make any such damn talk! For something very festive I think the Traditions 1-12 would be a little too grim, might bore you a little. As a matter of fact, speaking of Traditions, when they were first written back there in 1945 or 1946 as tentative guides to help us hang together and function, nobody paid any attention except a few "againers" who wrote me and asked what the hell are they about?

Nobody paid the slightest attention. But, little by little as these Traditions got around we had our clubhouse squabbles, our little rifts, this difficulty and that, it was found that the Traditions indeed did reflect experience and were guiding principles. So, they took hold a little more and a little more and a little more so that today the average AA coming in the door learns at once what they're about, about what kind of an outfit he really has landed in and by what principles his group and AA as a whole are governed. But, as I say, the dickens with all that. I would like to just spin some yarn and they will be a series of yarns which cluster around the preparation of the good old

AA bible and when I hear that it always makes me shudder because the guys who put it together weren't a damn bit biblical. I think sometimes some of the drunks have an idea that these old

timers went around with almost visible halos and long gowns and they were full of sweetness and light. Oh boy, how inspired they were, oh yes. But wait till I tell you. I suppose the book yarn really started in the living room of Doc and Annie Smith.

As you know, I landed there in the summer of '35, a little group caught hold. I helped Smithy briefly with it and he went on to found the first AA group in the world. And, as with all new groups, it was nearly all failure, but now and then, somebody saw the light and there was progress. Pampered, I got back to New York, a little more experienced group started there, and by the time we got around to 1937, this thing had leaped over into Cleveland, and began to move south from New York. But, it was still, we thought in those years, flying blind, a flickering candle indeed, that might at any moment be snuffed out. So, on this late fall afternoon in 1937, Smithy and I were talking together in his living room, Anne sitting there, when we began to count noses. How many people had stayed dry; in Akron, in New York, maybe a few in Cleveland? How many had stayed dry and for how long? And when we added up the total, it sure was a handful of, I don't know, 35 to 40 maybe. But enough time had elapsed on enough really fatal cases of alcoholism, so that we grasped the importance of these small statistics. Bob and I saw for the first time that this thing was going to succeed. That God in his providence and mercy had thrown a new light into the dark caves

where we and our kind had been and were still by the millions dwelling. I can never forget the elation and ecstasy that seized us both. And when we sat happily taking and reflecting, we reflected, that well, a couple of score of drunks were sober but this had taken three long years. There had been an immense amount of failure and a long time had been taken just to sober up the handful. How could this handful carry its' message to all those who still didn't know? Not all the drunks in the world could come to Akron or New York. But how could we transmit our message to them, and by what means? Maybe we could go to the old timers in each group, but that meant nearly everybody, to find the sum of money - somebody else's money, of course and say to them "Well now, take a sabbatical year off your job if you have one, and you go to Kentucky, Omaha, Chicago, San Francisco and Los Angeles and where ever it may be and you give this thing a year and get a group started."

It had already become evident by then that we were just about to be moved out of the City Hospital in Akron to make room for people with broken legs and ailing livers; that the hospitals were not too happy with us. We tried to run their business perhaps too much, and besides, drunks were apt to be noisy in the night and there were other inconveniences, which were all tremendous. So, it was obvious that because of drunks being such unlovely creatures, we would have to have a great chain of hospitals. And as that dream burst upon me, it sounded good, because you see, I'd been down in Wall Street in the promotion business and I remember the great sums of money that were made as soon as people got this chain idea. You know, chain drug stores, chain grocery stores, chain dry good stores. That evening Bob and I told them that we were within sight of success and that we thought this thing might go on and on and on, that a new light indeed was shining in our dark world. But how could this

light be a reflection and transmitted without being distorted and garbled? At this point, they turned the meeting over to me, and being a salesman, I set right to work on the drunk tanks and subsidies for the missionaries, I was pretty poor then.

We touched on the book. The group conscience consisted of 18 men good and true ... and the good and true men, you could see right away, were dammed skeptical about it all. Almost with one voice, they chorused "let's keep it simple, this is going to bring money into this thing, this is going to create a professional class. We'll all be ruined." "Well," I countered, "That's a pretty good argument. Lots to what you say ... but even within gunshot of this very house, alcoholics are dying like flies. And if this thing doesn't move any faster than it has in the last three years, it may be another 10 before it gets to the outskirts of Akron. How in God's name are we going to carry this message to others? We've got to take some kind of chance. We can't keep it so simple it becomes anarchy and gets complicated. We can't keep it so simple that it won't propagate itself, and we've got to have a lot of money to do these things." So, exerting myself to the utmost, which was considerable in those days, we finally got a vote in that little meeting and it was a mighty close vote by just a majority of maybe 2 or 3. The meeting said with some reluctance, "Well Bill, if we need a lot of dough, you better go back to New York where there's plenty of it and you raise it." Well, boy, that was the word that I'd been waiting for. So I scrambled back to the great city and I began to approach some people of means describing this tremendous thing that had happened. And it didn't seem so tremendous to the people of means at all. What? 35 or 40 drunks sober up? They have sobered them up before now, you know. And besides, Mr. Wilson, don't you think it's kind of sweeping up the shavings? I mean, wouldn't this be something for the Red Cross be better?

In other words, with all of my ardent solicitations, I got one hell of a freeze from the gentlemen of wealth. Well, I began to get blue and when I begin to get blue my stomach kicks up as well as other things.

I was lying in the bed one night with an imaginary ulcer attack (this used to happen all the time - I had one the time the 12 steps were written) and I said, "My God, we're starving to death here on Clinton Street." By this time the house was full of drunks. They were eating us out of house and home. In those days we never believed in charging anybody anything - so Lois was earning the money, I was being

the missionary and the drunks were eating the meals. "This can't go on. We've got to have those drunk tanks, we've got to have those missionaries, and we've got to have a book. That's for sure."

The next morning I crawled into my clothes and I called on my brother-in-law. He's a doctor and he is about the last person who followed my trip way down. The only one, save of course, the Lord. "Well," I said, "I'll go up and see Leonard." So I went up to see my brother-in-law Leonard and he pried out a little time between patients coming in there. I started my awful bellyache about these rich guys who wouldn't give us any dough for this great and glorious enterprise.

It seemed to me he knew a girl and I think she had an uncle that somehow tied up with the Rockefeller offices. I asked him to call and see if there was such a man and if there was, would he see us. On what slender threads our destiny sometimes hangs. So, the call was made. Instantly there came onto the other end of the wire the voice of dear Willard Richardson - one of the loveliest Christian gentlemen I have ever known. And the moment he recognized my brother-in-law he said, "Why Leonard, where have you been all these years?" "Well, my brother-in-law, unlike me, is a man of very few words, so he quickly said to dear old Uncle Willard, he had a brother-in-law

who had apparently some success sobering up drunks and could the two of us come over there and see him. "Why certainly," said dear Willard. "Come right over." So we go over to Rockefeller Plaza. We go up that elevator - 54 flights or 56 I guess it was, and we walk promptly into Mr. Rockefeller's personal offices, and ask to see Mr. Richardson. Here sits this lovely, benign old gentleman, who nevertheless had a kind of shrewd twinkle in his eye. So I sat down and told him about our exciting discovery, this terrific cure for alcoholics that had just hit the world, how it worked and what we have done for them. And, boy, this was the first receptive man with money or access to money - remember we were in Mr. Rockefeller's personal offices at this point - and by now, we had learned that this was Mr. Rockefeller's closest personal friend. So he said, "I'm very interested. Would you like to have lunch with me, Mr. Wilson?" Well, now you know, for a rising promoter, that sounded pretty good - going to have lunch with the best friends of John D. Things were looking up. My ulcer attack disappeared. So I had lunch with the old gentleman and we went over this thing again and again and, boy, he's so warm and kindly and friendly. Right at the close of the lunch he said, "Well now Mr. Wilson or Bill, if I can call you that, wouldn't you like to have a luncheon meeting with some of my friends? There's Frank Amos, he's in the advertising business but he was on a committee that recommended that Mr. Rockefeller drop the prohibition business. And there's Leroy Chipman, he looks after Mr. Rockefeller real estate. And there's Mr. Scotty, Chairman of the Board of the Riverside Church and a number of other people like that. I believe they'd like to hear this story." So a meeting was arranged and it fell upon a winter's night in 1937. And the meeting was held at 30 Rockefeller Plaza. We called in, posthaste, a couple of drunks from Akron - Smithy included, of course - heading the procession. I came in with

the New York contingent of four or five. And to our astonishment we were ushered into Mr., Rockefeller's personal boardroom right next to his office. I thought to myself "Well, now this is really getting hot." And indeed I felt very much warmed when I was told by Mr. Richardson that I was sitting in a chair just vacated by Mr. Rockefeller. I said "Well, now, we really are getting close to the bankroll." Old Doc Silkworth was there that night too, and he testified what he had seen happen to these new friends of ours, and each drunk, thinking of nothing better to say, told their stories of drinking and recovering and these folk listened. They seemed very definitely impressed. I could see that the moment for the big touch was coming. So, I gingerly brought up the subject of the drunk tanks, the subsidized missionaries, and the big question of a book or literature.

Well, God moves in mysterious ways, his wonders to perform. It didn't look like a wonder to me when Mr. Scott, head of a large engineering firm and Chairman of the Riverside Church, looked at us and said "Gentlemen, up to this point, this has been the work of goodwill only. No plan, no property, no paid people, just one carrying the good news to the next. Isn't that true? And may it not be that that is where the great power of this society lies? Now, if we subsidize it, might it not alter its' whole character? We want to do all we can, we're gathered for that, but would it be wise?" Well then, the salesmen all gave Mr. Scott the rush and we said, "Why, Mr. Scott, there're only 40 of us. It's taken 3 years. Why millions, Mr. Scott, will rot before this thing ever gets to them unless we have money and lots of it." And we made our case at last with these gentlemen for the missionaries, the drunk tanks and the book. So one of them volunteered to investigate us very carefully, and since poor old Dr. Bob was harder up than I was, and since the first group and the reciprocal community was in Akron, we directed their attention out there. Frank Amos, still a trustee in

the Foundation, at his own expense, got on a train, went out to Akron and made all sorts of preliminary inquiries around town about Dr. Bob. All the reports were good except that he was a drunk that recently got sober. He visited the little meeting out there. He went to the Smith house and he came back with what he thought was a very modest proposal. He recommended to these friends of ours that we should have at least a token amount of money at first, say \$50,000, something like that. That would clear up the mortgage on Smith's place. It would get us a little rehabilitation place. We could put Dr. Smith in charge. We could subsidize a few of these people briefly, until we got some more money. We could start the chain of hospitals. We'd have a few missionaries. We could get busy on the book, all for a mere \$50,000 bucks. Well, considering the kind of money we were backed up against, that did sound a little small, but, you know, one thing leads to another and it sounded real good. We were real glad. Mr. Willard Richardson, our original contact, then took that report into John D. Jr. as everybody recalls. And I've since heard what went on in there. Mr. Rockefeller read the report, called Willard Richardson and thanked him and said: "Somehow I am strangely stirred by all this. This interests me immensely." And then looking at his friend Willard, he said, "But isn't money going to spoil this thing? I'm terribly afraid that it would. And yet I am so strangely stirred by it."

Then came another turning point in our destiny. When that man whose business is giving away money said to Willard Richardson, "No," he said, I won't be the one to spoil this thing with money. You say these two men who are heading it are a little 'stressed', I'll put \$5,000 dollars in the Riverside Church treasury. Those folks can form themselves into a committee and draw on it, as they like. I want to hear what goes on. But, please don't ask me for any more money." Well, with 50 thousand that then was shrunk to five, we raised

the mortgage on Smithy's house for about three grand. That left two and Smith and I commenced chewing on that too. Well, that was a long way from a string of drunk tanks and books. What in thunder would we do? Well, we had more meetings with our newfound friends, Amos, Richardson, Scott, Chipman and those fellows who stuck with us to this day, some of them now gone. And, in spite of Mr. Rockefeller's advice, we again convinced these folks that this thing needed a lot of money. What could we do without it? So, one of them proposed, "Well, why don't we form a foundation, something like the Rockefeller Foundation?" I said, "I hope it will be like that with respect to money." And then one of them got a free lawyer from a firm who was interested in the thing. And we all asked him to draw up an agreement of trust, a charter for something to be called the Alcoholic Foundation. Why we picked that one, I don't know. I don't know whether the Foundation was alcoholic, it was the Alcoholic Foundation, not the Alcoholics Foundation. And the lawyer was very much confused because in the meeting, which formed the Foundation, we made it very plain that we did not wish to be in the majority. We felt

that there should be non-alcoholics on the board and they ought to be in a majority of one. "Well, indeed," said the lawyer, "What is the difference between an alcoholic and a non-alcoholic?" And one of our smart drunks said, "That's a cinch, a non-alcoholic is a guy who can drink and an alcoholic is a guy who can't drink." "Well," said the lawyer, "how do we state that legally?" We didn't know. So at length, we have a foundation and a board which I think then was about seven, consisting of four of these new friends, including my brother-in-law, Mr. Richardson, Chipman, Amos and some of us drunks. I think Smithy went on the board but I kind of coyly stayed off it thinking it would be more convenient later on.

So we had this wonderful new foundation. These friends, unlike Mr. Rockefeller, were sold on the idea that we needed a lot of dough, and so our salesmen around New York started to solicit some money, again, from the very rich. We had a list of them and we had credentials from friends of Mr. John D. Rockefeller. "How could you miss, I ask you, salesmen?" The Foundation had been formed in the spring of 1938 and all summer we solicited the rich. Well, they were either in Florida or they preferred the Red Cross, or some of them thought that drunks were disgusting and we didn't get one damn cent in the whole summer of 1938, praise God! Well, meantime, we began to hold trustee meetings and they were commiseration sessions on getting no dough. What with the mortgage and with me and Smithy eating away at it, the five grand had gone up with the flu, and we were all stone-broke again. Smithy couldn't get his practice back either because he was a surgeon and nobody likes to be carved up by an alcoholic surgeon - even if he was three years sober. So things were tough all around, no fooling. Well, what would we do?

One day, probably in August 1938, I produced at a Foundation meeting, a couple of chapters of a proposed book along with some recommendations of a couple of doctors down at John Hopkins to try to put the bite on the rich. And we still had these two book chapters kicking around. Frank Amos said, "Well now, I know the religious editor down there at Harpers, an old friend of mine, Gene Exman." He said, "Why don't you take these two book chapters, your story and the introduction to the book, down there and show them to Gene and see what he thinks about them." So I took the chapters down. To my great surprise, Gene who was to become a great friend of ours, looked at the chapters and said, "Why Mr. Wilson, could you write a whole book like this?" "Well, I said, "Sure, sure." There was more talk about it. I guess he went in and showed it to Mr.

Canfield, the big boss, and another meeting was had. The upshot was that Harpers intimated that they would pay me as the budding author, 15 hundred in advance royalties, bringing enough money in to enable me to finish the book. I felt awful good about that. It made me feel like I was an author or something. I felt real good about it but after a while, not so good. Because I began to reason, and so did the other boys, if this guy Wilson eats up the 15 hundred bucks while he's doing this book, after the book gets out, it will take a long time to catch up. And if this thing gets him publicity, what are we going to do with the inquiries? And, after all, what's a lousy 10% royalty anyway? The 15 hundred still looked pretty big to me. Then we thought too, now here's a fine publisher like Harpers, but if this book if and when done, should prove to be the main textbook for AA, why would we want our main means of propagation in the hands of somebody else? Shouldn't we control this thing? At this point, the book project really began.

I had a guy helping me on this thing who had red hair and ten times my energy and he was some promoter. He said, "Bill, this is something, come on with me." We walk into a stationary store, we buy a pad of blank stock certificates and we write across the top of them 'Works Publishing Company'- Par Value 25 Dollars. So we take the pad of these stock certificates, (of course we didn't bother to incorporate it, that didn't happen for several more years) we took this pad of stock certificates to the first AA meeting where you shouldn't mix money with spirituality. We said to the drunks "look, this thing is gonna be a cinch. Parker will take a third of this thing for services rendered. I, the author will take a third for services rendered, and you can have a third of these stock certificates par 25 if you'll just start paying up on your stock. If you only want one share, it's only five dollars a month, 5 months, see?" And the drunks all gave us this stony look

that said, "What the hell, you mean to say you're only asking us to buy stock in a book that you ain't written yet?" "Why sure," we said "If Harpers will put money in this thing why shouldn't you? Harpers said it's gonna be a good book." But the drunks still gave us this stony stare. We had to think up some more arguments. "We've been looking at pricing costs of the books, boys. We get a book here, ya know, 400 or 450 pages, it ought to sell for about \$3.50." Now back in those days we found on inquiry from the printers that that \$3.50 book could be printed for 35 cents making a 1,000% profit, of course, we didn't mention the other expenses, just the printing costs. "So boys, just think on it, when these books move out by the carload we will be printing them for 35 cents and we'll be selling them direct mail for \$3.50. How can you lose?" The drunks still gave us this stony stare. No salt. Well, we figured we had to have a better argument than that. Harpers said it was a good book, you can print them for 35~ and sell them for \$3.50, but how are we going to convince the drunks that we could move carload lots of them? Millions of dollars.

So we get the idea we'll go up to the Readers Digest, and we got an appointment with Mr. Kenneth Paine, thee managing editor there. Gee, I never forget the day we got off the train up at Pleasantville and were ushered into his office. We excitedly told him the story of this wonderful budding society. We dwelled upon the friendship of Mr. Rockefeller and Harry Emerson Fosdick. You know we were traveling in good company with Paine. The society, by the way, was about to publish a textbook, then in the process of being written and we were wondering, Mr. Paine, if this wouldn't be a matter of tremendous interest to the Reader's Digest? Having in mind of course that the Reader's Digest has a circulation of 12 million readers and if we could only get a free ad of this coming book in the Digest we really would move something, ya see?

"Well," Mr. Paine said, "this sounds extremely interesting, I like this idea, why I think it'll be an absolutely ideal piece for the Digest. How soon do you think this new book will be out Mr. Wilson?" I said, "We've got a couple of chapters written, ahem, if we can get right at it, Mr. Paine, uh, you know, uh, probably uh, this being October, we ought to get this thing out by April or next May. "Why," Mr. Paine said, "I'm sure the Digest would like a thing like this. Mr. Wilson, I'll take it up with the editorial board, and when the time is right and you get already to shoot, come up and we'll put a special feature writer on this thing and we'll tell all about your society." And then my promoter friend said, "But Mr. Paine, will you mention the new book in the piece?" "Yes," said Mr. Paine, "we will mention the book." Well, that was all we needed, we went back to the drunks and said, "now look, boys, there are positively millions in this - how can you miss? Harpers says it's going to be a good book. We buy them for 35¢ from the printer, we sell them for \$3.50 and the Reader's Digest is going to give us a free add in its' piece and boys, those books will move out by the carload. How can you miss? And after all, we only need 4 or 5 thousand bucks."

So we began to sell the shares of Works Publishing, not yet incorporated, par value \$25 and at \$5 per month to the poor people. Some people bought as little as one and one guy bought 10 shares. We sold a few shares to non-alcoholics and my promoter friend who was

to get one-third interest was a very important man in this transaction because he went out and kept collecting the money from the drunks so that little Ruthie Hock and I could keep working on the book and Lois could have some groceries (even though she was still working in that department store).

So, the preparation started and some more chapters were done and we went to AA meetings in New York with these chapters in the rough. It

wasn't like chicken-in-the-rough; the boys didn't eat those chapters up at all. I suddenly discovered that I was in this terrific whirlpool of arguments. I was just the umpire - I finally had to stipulate. "Well boys, over here you got the Holly Rollers who say we need all the good old-fashioned stuff in the book, and over here you tell me we've got to have a psychological book, and that never cured anybody, and they didn't do very much with us in the missions, so I guess you will have to leave me just to be the umpire. I'll scribble out some roughs here and show them to you and let's get the comments in." So we fought, bled and died our way through one chapter after another. We sent them out to Akron and they were peddled around and there were terrific hassles about what should go in this book and what should not. Meanwhile, we set drunks up to write their stories or we had newspaper people to write the stories for them to go in the back of the book. We had an idea that we'd have a text and all and then we'd have stories all about the drunks who were staying sober.

Then came that night when we were up around Chapter 5. As you know I'd gone on about myself, which was natural after all. And then the little introductory chapter and we dealt with the agnostic and we described alcoholism, but, boy, we finally got to the point where we really had to say what the book was all about and how this deal works. As I told you this was a six-step program then. On this particular evening, I was lying in bed on Clinton Street wondering what the deuce this next chapter would be about. The idea came to me, well, we need a definite statement of concrete principles that these drunks can't wiggle out of. Can't be any wiggling out of this deal at all. And this six-step program had two big gaps in-between they'll wiggle out of. Moreover if this book goes out to distant readers, they have to have got to have an absolutely explicit program by which to go. This was while I was thinking these thoughts, while my imaginary ulcer was paining

me and while I was mad as hell at these drunks because the money was coming in too slow. Some had the stock and weren't paying up. A couple of guys came in and they gave me a big argument and we yelled and shouted and I finally went down and laid on the bed with my ulcer and I said, "poor me."

There was a pad of paper by the bed and I reached for that and said "you've got to break this program up into small pieces so they can't wiggle out. So I started writing, trying to bust it up into little pieces. And when I got the pieces set down on that piece of yellow paper, I put numbers on them and was rather agreeably surprised when it came out to twelve. I said, "That's a good significant figure in Christianity and mystic lore." Then I noticed that instead of leaving the God idea to the last, I'd got it up front but I didn't pay much attention to that, it looked pretty good. Well, the next meeting comes along; I'd gone on beyond the steps trying to amplify them in the rest of that chapter to the meeting and boy, pandemonium broke loose. "What do you mean by changing the program, what about this, what about that, this thing is overloaded with God. We don't like this, you've got these guys on their knees - stand them up!" A lot of these drunks are scared to death of being Godly, let's take God out of it entirely." Such were the arguments that we had. Out of that terrific hassle came the Twelve Steps. That argument caused the introduction of the phrase that has been a lifesaver to thousands; it was certainly none of my doing. I was on the pious side then, you see, still suffering from this big hot flash of mine. The idea of "God as you understand Him" came out of that perfectly ferocious argument and we put that in.

Well, little by little things ground on, little by little the drunks put in money and we kept an office open in Newark, which was the office of a defunct business where I tried to establish my friend. The money ran low at times and Ruthie

Hock worked for no pay. We gave her plenty of stock in the Works Publishing of course. All you had to do is tear it off the pay, par 25 have a week's salary, dear. So, we got around to about January 1939. Somebody said "hadn't we better test this thing out; hadn't we better make a pre-publication copy, a multilith or mimeographed copy of this text and a few of the personal stories that had come in - try it out on the preacher, on the doctor, the Catholic Committee on Publications, psychiatrists, policemen, fishwives, housewives, drunks, everybody. Just to see if we've got anything that goes against the grain anyplace and also to find out if we can't get some better ideas here?" So at considerable expense, we got this pre-publication copy made; we peddled it around and comments came back, some of them very helpful. It went, among other places, to the Catholic Committee on Publications in New York and at that time we had only one Catholic member to take it there and he had just gotten out of the asylum and hadn't had anything to do with preparing the book.

The book passed inspection and the stories came in. Somehow we got them edited; somehow we got the galleys together. We got up to the printing time. Meanwhile, the drunks had been kind of slow on those subscription payments and a little further on I was able to go up to Charlie Towns where old Doc Silkworth held forth. Charlie believed in us so we put the slug on to Charlie for \$2,500 bucks. Charlie didn't want any stocks; he wanted a promissory note on the book not yet written. So, we got the \$2,500 from Charlie routed around through the Alcoholic Foundation so that it could be tax exempt. Also, we had blown \$6,000 in these 9 months in supporting the 3 of us in an office and the till was getting low. We still had to get this book printed. So, we go up to Cornwall Press, which is the largest printer in the world, where we'd made previous inquiries and we asked about printing and they said they'd be glad

to do it and how many books would we like? We said that was hard to estimate. Of course our membership is very small at the present time and we wouldn't sell many to the membership but after all, the Readers Digest is going to print a plug about it to its' 2 million readers. This book should go out in carloads when it's printed.

The printer was none other than dear old Mr. Blackwell, one of our Christian friends and Mr. Blackwell said, "How much of a down payment are you going to make? How many books would you like printed?" "Well," we said, "we'll be conservative, let's print 5,000 just to start with." Mr. Blackwell asked us what we were going to use for money. We said that we wouldn't need much; just a few hundred dollars on account would be all right. I told you; after all, we're traveling in very good company, friends of Mr. Rockefeller and all that.

So, Blackwell started printing the 5,000 books; the plates were made and the galleys were read. Gee, all of a sudden we thought of the Reader's Digest, so we go up to there, walk in on Mr. Kenneth Paine and say, "We're all ready to shoot." And Mr. Paine replies "Shoot what - Oh yes, I remember you two, Mr. Marcus and Mr. Wilson. You gentlemen were here last fall, I told you the Reader's Digest would be interested in this new work and in your book. Well, right after you were here, I consulted our editorial board and to my great surprise they didn't like the idea at all and I forgot to tell you!" Oh boy, we had the drunks with \$5,000 bucks in it, Charlie Towns hooked for \$2,500 bucks and \$2,500 on the cuff with the printer. There was \$500 left in the bank, what in the deuce would we do?

Morgan Ryan, the good-looking Irishman who had taken the book over to the Catholic Committee on Publication, had been in an earlier time a good ad man. He said that he knew Gabriel Heatter. "Gabriel is putting on these 3 minute heart to heart programs on the radio. I'll get an

interview with him and maybe he'll interview me on the radio about all this," said Ryan. So, our spirits rose once again. Then all of a sudden we had a big chill, suppose this Irishman got drunk before Heatter interviewed him? So, we went to see Heatter and lo and behold, Heatter said he would interview him and then we got still more scared. So, we rented a room in the downtown Athletic Club and we put Ryan in there with a day and night guard for ten days. Meanwhile, our spirits rose again. We could see those books just going out in carloads. Then my promoter friend said, "Look, there should be a follow-up on a big thing like this here interview. It'll be heard all over the country.... national network. I think folks that are the market for this book are the doctors, the physicians. I suggest that we pitch the last \$500 that we have in the treasury on a postal card shower, which will go to every physician east of the Rocky Mountains. On this postal card we'll say "Hear all about Alcoholics Anonymous on Gabriel Heatter's Program - spend \$3.50 for the book Alcoholics Anonymous, sure-cure for alcoholism." So, we spent the last \$500 on the postal card shower and mailed them out.

They managed to keep Ryan sober although he since hasn't made it. All the drunks had their ears glued to the radio. The group market in Alcoholics Anonymous was already saturated because you see, we had 49 stockholders and they'd all gotten a book free, then we had 28 guys with stories and they all got a free book. So we had run out of the AA books. But we could see the book moving out in carloads to these doctors and their patients. Sure enough, Ryan is interviewed. Heatter pulled out the old tremolo stop and we could see the book orders coming back in carloads.

Well, we just couldn't wait to go down to old Post Office Box 658, Church Street Annex, the address printed in the back of the old books. We hung at it for about three days and then my friends Hank and Ruthie Hock and I went over

and we looked in Box 658. It wasn't a locked box; you just looked through the glass. We could see that there were a few of these postal cards. I had a terrible sinking sensation. But my friend the promoter said "Bill, they can't put all those cards in the box, they've got bags full of it out there." We go to the clerk and he brings out 12 lousy postal cards, 10 of them were completely illegible, written by doctors, druggists, and monkeys? We had exactly two orders for the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and we were absolutely and utterly stone-broke.

The Sheriff then moved in on the office, poor Mr. Blackwell wondered what to do for money and felt like taking the book over at that very opportune moment, the house which Lois and I lived in was foreclosed and we and our furniture were set out on the street. Such was the state of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous* and the state of grace the Wilson's were in the summer of 1939. Moreover, a great cry went up from the drunks, "What about our \$4,500?" Even Charlie (Towns) who was pretty well off was a little uneasy about the note for \$2,500. What would we do? What could we do? We put our goods in storage on the cuff; we couldn't even pay the drayman. An A. A. lent us his summer camp, another AA lent us his car, and the folks around New York began to pass the hat for groceries for the Wilson's and supplied us with \$50 per month. So, we had a lot of discontented stockholders, \$50 bucks a month, a summer camp and an automobile with which to revive the failing fortunes of the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*.

We began to shop around from one magazine to another asking if they would give us some publicity, nobody bit and it looked like the whole dump was going to be foreclosed; book, office, Wilson's, everything. One of the boys in New York happened to be a little bit prosperous at the time and he had a fashionable clothing business on Fifth Avenue, which we learned was mostly on

mortgage, having drunk nearly all of it up. His name was Bert Taylor. I went up to Bert one day and I said "Bert, there is a promise of an article in *Liberty Magazine*, I just got it today but it won't come out until next September. It's going to be called 'Alcoholics and God' and will be printed by Fulton Oursler the editor of *Liberty Magazine*. Bert, when that piece is printed, these books will go out in carload lots. We need \$1,000 bucks to get us through the summer." Bert asked, "Well, are you sure that the article is going to be printed?" "Oh yes," I said, "that's final." He said, "O.K., I haven't got the dough but there's this man down in Baltimore, Mr. Cochran, he's a customer of mine, he buys his pants in here. Let me call him up." Bert gets on long-distance with Mr. Cochran in Baltimore, a very wealthy man, and says to him "Mr. Cochran, from time to time I mentioned this alcoholic fellowship to which I belong. Our fellowship has just come out with a magnificent new textbook, a sure cure for alcoholism. Mr. Cochran, this is something we think every public library in America should have, and Mr. Cochran, the retail price of the book is \$2.50. Mr. Cochran, if you'll just buy a couple of thousand of those books and put them in the large libraries, of course we would sell them for that purpose at a considerable discount."

Mr. Cochran, some publicity will come out next fall about this new book *Alcoholics Anonymous*, but in the meantime, these books are moving slowly and we need, say, \$1,000 to tide us over. Would you loan the Works Publishing Company this?"

Mr. Cochran asked what the balance sheet of the Works Publishing Company looked like and after he learned what it looked like he said "no thanks." So Bert then said, "Now Mr. Cochran, you know me. Would you loan the money to me on the credit of my business?" "Why certainly," Mr. Cochran said, "send me down your note." So Bert hocked the business that a year or two later was to

go broke anyway and saved the book *Alcoholics Anonymous*. The thousand dollars lasted until the *Liberty* article came out. 800 inquiries came in as a result of that, we moved a few books and we barely squeaked through the year 1939. In all this period we heard nothing from John D. Rockefeller when all of a sudden, in about February 1940, Mr. Richardson came to a trustees meeting of the Foundation and announced that he had great news. We were told that Mr. Rockefeller, whom we had not heard from since 1937, had been watching us all this time with immense interest. Moreover, Mr. Rockefeller wanted to give this fellowship a dinner to which he would invite his friends to see the beginnings of this new and promising start.

Mr. Richardson produced the invitation list. Listed were the President of Chase Bank, Wendell Wilkie, and all kinds of very prominent people, many of them extremely rich. I mean, after a quick look at the list I figured it would add up to a couple of billion dollars. So, we felt maybe at least, you know, there would be some money in sight. So, the dinner came, and we got Harry Emerson Fosdick who had reviewed the AA book and he gave us a wonderful plug. Dr. Kennedy came and spoke on the medical attitudes. He'd seen a patient of his, a very hopeless gal (Marty Mann) recover. I got up, talked about life among the "anonymie," and the bankers assembled 75 strong and in great wealth, sat at the tables with the alcoholics. The bankers had come probably for some sort of command performance and they were a little suspicious that perhaps this was another prohibition deal, but they warmed up under the influence of the alcoholics.

Mr. Ryan, the hero of the Heatter episode and still sober, was asked at his table by a distinguished banker, "Why, Mr. Ryan, we presumed you were in the banking business." Ryan says, "Not at all sir, I just got out of Great Stone Asylum." Well, that intrigued the bankers and they were all warming up. Unfortunately, Mr. Rockefeller couldn't get to

the dinner. He was quite sick that night so he sent his son, a wonderful gent, Nelson Rockefeller, in his place instead. After the show was over and everyone was in fine form, we were all ready again for the big touch. Nelson Rockefeller got up and speaking for his father said, "My father sends word that he is so sorry that he cannot be here tonight, but is so glad that so many of his friends can see the beginnings of this great and wonderful thing. Something that affected his life more than almost anything that had crossed his path." A stupendous plug that was! Then Nelson said, "Gentlemen, this is a work that proceeds on good will. It requires no money." Whereupon, the 2 billion dollars got up and walked out. That was a terrific letdown, but we weren't let down for too long.

Again, the hand of Providence had intervened. Right after dinner, Mr. Rockefeller asked that the talks and pamphlets be published. He approached the rather defunct Works Publishing Company and said he would like to buy 400 books to send to all of the bankers who had come to the dinner and to those who had not. Seeing that this was for a good purpose, we let him have the books cheap. He bought them cheaper than anybody has since. We sold 400 books to John D. Rockefeller Jr. for one buck apiece to send to his banker friends. He sent out the books and pamphlets and with it, he wrote a personal letter and signed every dog gone one of them. In this letter he stated how glad he was that his friends had been able to see the great beginning of what he thought would be a wonderful thing, how deeply it had affected him and then he added (unfortunately) "gentlemen, this is a work of goodwill. It needs little, if any, money. I am giving these good people \$1,000." So, the bankers all received Mr. Rockefeller's letter and counted it up on the cuff. Well, if John D. is giving \$1,000, me with only a few million should send these boys about \$10! One who had an alcoholic relative in tow sent us \$300. So, with Mr. Rockefeller's \$1,000 plus the solicitation of all the

rest of these bankers, we got together the princely sum of \$3,000 which was the first outside contribution of the Alcoholic Foundation.

The \$3,000 was divided equally between Smithy and me so that we could keep going somehow. We solicited that dinner list for 5 years and got about \$3,000 a year for 5 years. At the end of that time, we were able to say to Mr. Rockefeller, "We don't need any more money. The book income is helping to support our office, the groups are contributing to fill in and the royalties are taking care of Dr. Bob and Bill Wilson."

Now you see Mr. Rockefeller's decision not to give us money was a blessing. He gave of himself. He gave of himself when he was under public ridicule for his views about alcohol. He said to the whole world "this is good." The story went out on the wires all over the world. People ran into the bookstores to get the new book and boy, we really began to get some book orders. An awful lot of

inquiries came into the little office at Vessy Street. The book money began to pay Ruth. We hired one more to help. There was Ruthie, another gal and I. And then came Jack Alexander with his terrific article in the Saturday Evening Post. Then an immense lot of inquiries... 6,000 or 7,000 of them. Alcoholics Anonymous had become a national institution.

Such is the story of the preparation of the book "Alcoholics Anonymous" and of its subsequent effect, you all have some notion. The proceeds of that book have repeatedly saved the office in New York. But, it isn't the money that has -come out of it that matters; it is the message that it carried. That transcended the mountains and the sea and is even at this moment, lighting candles in dark caverns and on distant beaches.

Big Book Names & Dates

From the First 188 Pages of the Big Book

PREFACE 2ED

- xv – **Bill Wilson & Dr. Bob** during a talk between a NY stockbroker & Akron physician (they first met on 5/12/35)
- xvi – **Ebby Thacher** alcoholic friend in contact with Oxford Group
- xvi – **Dr. Silkworth** (named) NY specialist in alcoholism
- xvi – **Bill Wilson** The broker
- xvi – **Dr. Bob** the Akron physician
- xvii – **Bill Dotson** AA#3 (sober date was 6/26/35, Bill Wilson & Dr. Bob first visited him on 6/28/35)
- xviii – **Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick** (named) noted clergyman
- xviii – **Fulton Oursler** (named) editor of Liberty
- xviii – **John Rockefeller Jr.** (named) gave dinner
- xviii – **Jack Alexander** (named) wrote Saturday Evening Post article
- xix – **Traditions** all Twelve Traditions mentioned
- xx – **recovery rate from 1939-1955** Of alcoholics who came to AA & really tried, 50% got sober at once & remained that way; 25% sobered up after some relapses, and among the remainder, those who stayed on with AA showed improvement
- xxvii – **9 years experience** Dr. Silkworth had 9 years of experience with alcoholics & drug addicts when he wrote this
- xxvii – **Bill Wilson** one of the leading contributors of this book
- xxxi – **Hank Parkhurst** man brought in to be treated for chronic alcoholism
- xxxi – **Fitz Mayo** another case, had hid in a barn

BILL'S STORY (BILL WILSON)

- 1 – **Winchester Cathedral** Bill Wilson has a spiritual experience ("Here I stood on the edge of the abyss into which thousands were falling that very day. A feeling of despair settled down on me - where was He - why did He not come - and suddenly in that moment of darkness, He was there. I felt an all-enveloping, comforting, powerful presence. Tears stood in my eyes, and as I looked about, I saw on the faces of others nearby, that they too had glimpsed the great reality.")
- 1 – **Thomas Thetcher** an old tombstone (the name of the Hampshire Grenadier)
- 1 – **a special token** Upon leaving France the men of his [Bill Wilson's] battery paid him special honor. His letter of January 3, 1919, read: "Quite a touching thing happened yesterday. The men presented Captain Sackville and me each with a watch, chain and ring. The whole battery was lined up, and I tell you it was equal to promotion and decoration by J. J. Pershing himself! Coming as it did from a clear sky, it was quite overwhelming. Wouldn't have changed insignia with a brigadier general. It means so much more

DOCTOR'S OPINION

- (was page 1 in the first edition of the Big Book)
- xxv-xxxii **Dr. William D. Silkworth** well known doctor (worked at Towns Hospital, N.Y.C.)
- xxv – **Bill Wilson** patient he regarded as hopeless

- than promotion. Insofar as I know, we are the only people in the regiment who have been so honored. I'm sure you will be as happy and proud as I am." which had inspired such awe in me as a lad
- 4 – **Penick & Ford** XYZ-32 (stock) (Penick & Ford is a corn products company, it went from 52 to 32 in 1 day)
- 4 – **Dick Johnson** friend in Montreal (worked at Greenshields & Co., a brokerage house)
- 4 – **1930** By the following spring
- 4 – **Macy's** wife (Lois) work in dept. store
- 5 – **A. Wheeler & F. Winans** 1932 formed group to buy bender - chance vanished
- 5 – **written sweet promises** Promise followed empty promise. On October 20, 1928, Bill wrote in the family Bible, the most sacred place he knew: 'To my beloved wife that has endured so much, let this stand as evidence of my pledge to you that I have finished with drink forever.' By Thanksgiving Day of that year he had written, 'My strength is renewed a thousandfold in my love for you,' In January 1929, he added, 'To tell you once more that I am finished with it. I love you.' None of those promises, however, carried the anguish Bill expressed in an undated letter to Lois: 'I have failed again this day. That I should continue to even try to do right in the grand manner is perhaps a great foolishness. Righteousness simply does not seem to be in me. Nobody wishes it more than I. Yet no one flouts it more often.' Again, he wrote a promise to his wife in the family Bible: 'Finally and for a lifetime, thank God for your love.' The promise was dated September 3, 1930. Like those that had preceded it, it was not kept. That was the last of the Bible promises.
- 6-7 – doctor came with sedative, next day drinking gin & sedative
- 7 – **early spring 1934** I was forty pounds under weight
- 7 – **Dr. L. Strong & Dr. Emily** brother-in-law (husband of sister Dorothy) & mother put him in Towns Hospital
- 7 – **Dr. Silkworth** met kind doctor explained ill, body & mind
- 7 – **Summer, 1934** After a time I returned to the hospital
- 8 – **11/11/34** Armistice Day 1934
- 8-12 – **Ebby Thacher** old school friend
- 9 – **Shep C, Rowland H, Cebra G** two? (three) men appeared in court (Shep Cornell, Rowland Hazzard & Cebra Graves) August 1934
- 9 – **chartered an airplane** January 1929, from Albany
- N.Y. to newly opened Manchester Vt. 10 **Fayette Griffith** (Bill's) grandfather 10 **Winchester Cathedral** (see page 1) 12 **the Cathedral** Winchester Cathedral (see page 1)
- 13 – **12/11/34** At the hospital I was separated from alcohol for the last time (Bill was admitted to the hospital at 2:38PM and he is 39 years old)
- 13 – **Ebby & Shep Cornell** schoolmate visited at hosp with friend
- 14 – **Dr. Silkworth** friend, the doctor
- 14 – **12/14/34** God's impact on Bill is sudden & profound, he calls Silky & describes what just happened, this spiritual experience as THE result of the work he did on pages 13 & 14 were all done when Bill had 3 days of sobriety or less!
- 14 – **Ebby** friend emphasized
- 16 – **Bill C.** committed suicide in Bill & Lois's home after having stolen & sold about \$700 worth of their clothes and luggage (a lawyer, stayed with them almost a year, died 1936)
- 16 – **36 years sober, age 75** Bill W., co-founder of AA, died January 24, 1971
- THERE IS A SOLUTION**
- 21 – **mostly from Bill's story** Here is the fellow who has been puzzling you...
- 26 – **Rowland Hazard** certain American Business man -treated by Dr. Carl Jung (1931) & joined the Oxford Group in February 1934
- 26 – **Freud & Adler** consulted best known American psychiatrists (Freud was sick & Adler was

booked up so Rowland ended up working with Jung)

26 – **Dr. Carl Jung** (named) European psychiatrist

28 – **William James** (named) American psychologist who wrote "Varieties of Religious Experience"

MORE ABOUT ALCOHOLISM

32-3 – A man of thirty (On page 123 of Richard Peabody's 1931 book "The Common Sense of Drinking", Peabody briefly mentions an unknown man who gave up drinking until he had made his fortune five years later. Resuming "moderate" drinking, he was soon back in his

alcoholic difficulties, losing his money in two or three years and dying of alcoholism a few years after that. This anecdotal account was probably the germ idea for this story)

35-7 – **Ralph Furlong** a friend we shall call Jim (Ralph is the author of the story "Another Prodigal Son" which only appeared in the first edition of the Big Book)

37-8 – jay walker story

39-43 – Harry Brick Fred

43 – **Dr. Percy Poliak** staff member world-renowned hospital (Bellevue Hospital, N.Y.)

WE AGNOSTICS

50 – **Alfred E. Smith** "celebrated American statesman" (four time governor of New York and unsuccessful first Roman Catholic presidential candidate.)

51 – **Wright brothers** (named) first successful flight 1903

51 – **Professor Langley** Samuel P. Langley, flying machine landed in Potomac - 1903 project for War Dept.

52 – **Wright brothers** (named) built a machine that could fly

55 – people who proved that man could never fly

56 – **Fitz Mayo** the minister's son

56 – **Bill Wilson** approached by an alcoholic

HOW IT WORKS

INTO ACTION

76 – **Book of James 2:20,26** Faith without works is dead

79 – man we know was remarried

80 – **Oxford Group member** he accepted sum of money from business rival - explained in church

Working With Others

101 – **Eskimo** running away from drinking to Greenland Ice cap

TO WIVES

FAMILY AFTERWARD

124 – Henry Ford (named)

133 – one of the many doctors

135 – **Earl Treat** one of our friends is a heavy smoker and coffee drinker

TO EMPLOYERS

(chapter was written by Hank Parkhurst)

136 – **Hank Parkhurst** member who spent life in world of big business

136 – Mr. B.

137 – one of the best salesmen

137 – man who hung himself

138 – **Frank Winans?** officer of one of largest banks in America

138 – **Bob E. or Rowland H.?** an executive of the same bank

140 – **Dr. Edward Cowles?** Chicago doctor with spinal fluid theory of alcoholics (see www.eskimo.com/~burked/history/cowles.html)

141 – **Standard Oil New Jersey** "if my company" (that Hank Parkhurst worked for)

148 – vice-president of large industrial concern

149 – **Honor Dealers Co.** I own a little company (an automobile polish distributorship (see page 246 & 248)

149-50 – Bill Wilson & Jim Burwell two alcoholic employees

VISION FOR YOU

- 151 – Bill's former Higher Power King Alcohol
- 151 – **Four Horsemen** (named) Terror,
Bewilderment, Frustration, Despair -
Revelations 6:2-8 war, famine, pestilence,
and death personified the four plagues of
mankind
- 153 – **Bill Wilson** one of our numbers made a
journey
- 153 – **Akron, OH.** a certain western city
- 153 – **National Rubber Machinery** business (of that
trip) involved in proxy fight
- 154 – **Akron, Ohio** in a strange place (had to have
that one)
- 154 – The Merry Man Tavern an attractive bar
- 154 – **Mayflower Hotel** paced a hotel lobby
- 154 – **Reverend Walter Tunks** clergyman he phoned
(Rector of St. Paul's Episcopal Church in
Akron)
- 155 – "the old Episcopal Church" church selected at
random
- 155 – **Dr. Bob** resident near nadir of alcoholic
despair
- 155 – **AMA convention** went on a roaring bender
(Traymore Hotel in Atlantic City, NJ)
- 156 – **around 6/17/35** He (Dr. Bob) has not had a
drink since. (It is generally stated that Dr.
Bob's sobriety date and the founding date of
AA is 6/10/35, but recent facts around Dr.
Bob's last drink indicate that this date is
closer to a week or so later.)
- 156 – **Mrs. Hall/Akron City Hosp** head nurse of
local hospital
- 156-8 – **Bill Dotson** real corker, none too
promising, future AA, lawyer
- 158 – **6/26/35** He (Bill Dotson) never drank again.
- 158 – **Ernie Galbraith - Akron** devil may care
young fellow
- 159 – **Bill Wilson** our friend of the hotel lobby
incident
- 159 – **Dr. Bob, Bill D, Ernie G** leaving behind his
first acquaintance, the lawyer and the devil-
may-care chap

- 159 – Archie T, Bill/Bob G (Salesman), Bill Van H,
Dr. Bob, Charlie S, Dick S (AA#7), Ernie G,
Harry Z, Jim S (Writer), Joe D (AA #5),
Marie B, May B & Tom L/Jim L, Paul S,
Ralph F, Wally G, Walter B - all 17 have
stories in 1st edition. Additionally, Phil S
(AA#5), Bill V, J.D.H., Bob E, Ken A were
sober by 1937. Some may go with p.161. A
year and 6 months later these 3 succeeded
with 7 more (puts this early 1937)
- 160 – T. Henry & Clarace Williams One man and
his wife
- 161 – **Cleveland, OH.** community 30 miles away
- 161 – **Lloyd T, Clarence S, Charlie J.** (see names
from pg. 159) has 15 fellows of AA
- 161 – **New York** eastern city
- 162 – **Towns Hospital, NYC** well known hospital for
treatment of alcohol & drugs
- 162 – **Bill Wilson** member there 6 years ago
- 162 – **Dr. Silkworth** doctor in attendance
- 162 – eastern city NYC
- 162 – western friends Ohio
- 162 – New York, Akron/Cleveland our two large
centers
- 163 – **Hank Parkhurst** AA member living in a large
community (Montclair, NJ)
- 163 – **Dr. Howard** prominent psychiatrist (of
Montclair, NJ/Chief Psychiatrist for the State
of NJ)
- 163 – **Dr. Russell Blaisdell** chief psychiatrist of a
large public hospital (Rockland State
Hospital in NY)

DOCTOR BOB'S NIGHTMARE

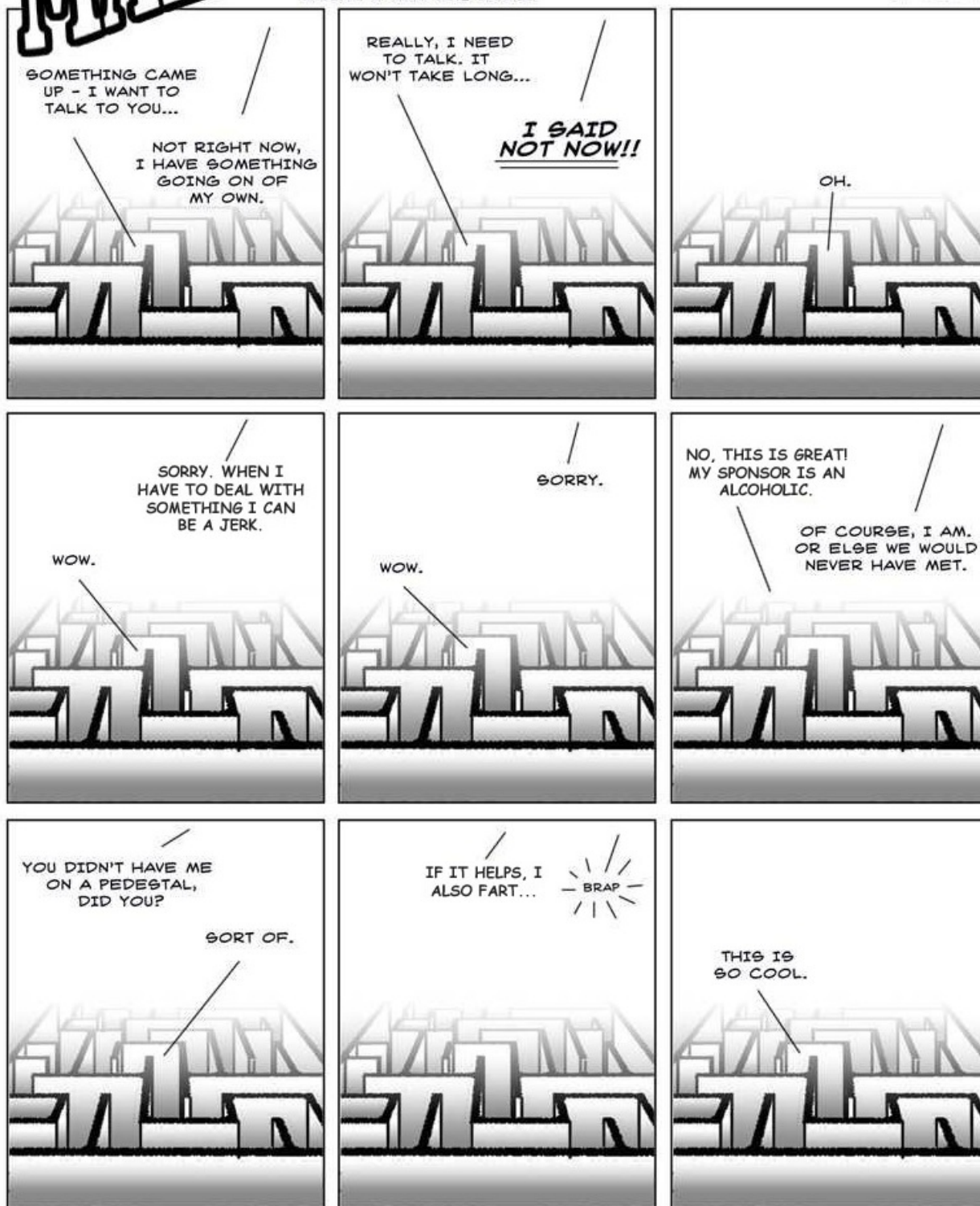
- Dr. Bob Smith
- 171 – **Sister Ignatia** (named) At St. Thomas
Hospital, Dr. Bob was well assisted
beginning in August 1939 (along with Dr.
Bob's office girl Lillian)
- 171 – **St. Johnsbury, VT.** I was born (8/8/1879) in a
small New England village
- 171 – Judge & Mrs. Walter Perrin Smith Dr. Bob's
father & mother

- 172 – **St. Johnsbury Academy** Dr. Bob graduates from high school 1898
- 172 – **Dartmouth College** one of the best colleges in the country (in Hanover, N.H., graduated 1902)
- 173 – **Univ. of Michigan** entering one of the largest universities in the country (1905)
- 174 – **Rush Medical Univ.** another of the leading universities of the country (near Chicago, Ill., received medical degree 1910)
- 174 – **Akron, OH.** western city
- 174 – **1912** I opened an office downtown
- 174-5 local sanitarium
- 175 – **Scylla and Charybdis** (named) (mythology: Strait of Messina-Big rock with monster (Scylla) one side, whirlpool (Charybdis) on other. Odysseus managed to navigate through) translated: "between a rock & a hard place"
- 175 – **1/16/19 - 12/5/33** Eighteenth Amendment (Prohibition)
- 176 – **?** hide out in one of the clubs
- 176 – **?** registering at a hotel
- 176 – **Anne Smith** my wife (Anne & Dr. Bob went out together for 17 years before they were married)
- 177 – **Wallace Beery/Tugboat Annie** (named) play or movie involving a drinking man
- 178 – **Oxford Group** crowd of people -their poise, health and happiness (Dr. Bob got involved with the O.G. in 1933 & separated himself from them Nov. or Dec. 1939)
- 179 – **Henrietta Sieberling** a lady called up my wife
- 179 – 5/12/35 We entered her house at exactly five o'clock
- 179 – **AMA Convention** meeting of a national society (Traymore Hotel in Atlantic City, NJ; June 10-14, Monday-Friday, 1935)
- 179 – nurse Lily/Cuyahoga Falls I woke up at a friend's house, town near home
- 179 – **Bill Wilson** my newly made friend
- 179 – **Bill Wilson** meets a friend of hers 181 **11/16/50**
Dr. Bob died on 11/16/50, he was 55 years old, he had 20 years sober

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE PEDESTAL

BY JOE A.



That Ain't in the Book!

We hear a lot of stuff said in meetings that can't be reconciled with the program as described in the Big Book of Alcoholics Anonymous. What follows are some of the things we often hear, along with what the 1st Edition of our basic text has to say on the subject.

This list, along with the corresponding page and paragraph from the Big Book that deals with the subject.

"Remember your last drunk."

"We are unable, at times, to bring into our consciousness with sufficient force the memory of the suffering and humiliation of even a week or a month ago. We are without defense against the first drink."

Page 24, Paragraph 2

"I choose not to drink today."

"The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink."

Page 24 Paragraph 2

"Play the tape all the way through."

"The almost certain consequences that follow taking even a glass of beer do not crowd into the mind to deter us. If these thoughts do occur, they are hazy and readily supplanted with the old threadbare idea that this time we shall handle ourselves like other people. There is a complete failure of the kind of defense that

keeps one from putting his hand on a hot stove."

Page 24, paragraph 3

"Think through the drink."

"Once more: The alcoholic at certain times has no effective mental defense against the first drink. Except in a few rare cases, neither he nor any other human being can provide such a defense. His defense must come from a Higher Power."

Page 43, paragraph 4:

"I will always be recovering, never recovered."

"ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered from Alcoholism"

Title Page

"Doubtless you are curious to discover how and why, in face of expert opinion to the contrary, we have recovered from a hopeless condition of mind and body.

Page 20, paragraph 2

"We, of Alcoholics Anonymous, are more than one hundred men and women who have recovered from a seemingly hopeless state of mind and body."

Forward, First Edition

"Further on, clear-cut directions are given showing how we recovered."

^{4 4} As of January 2011, primarypurposegroup.org is a non-working website.

Page 132, paragraph 2

"We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others."

Page 132, paragraph 3

"We are all just an arm's length away from a drink."

"And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone - even alcohol. For by this time sanity will have returned. We will seldom be interested in liquor. If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame. We react sanely and normally, and we will find that this has happened automatically. We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it. We are not fighting it, neither are we avoiding temptation. We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality - safe and protected. We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us"

Page 84, paragraph 4

"I don't have an alcohol problem, I have a living problem."

"In our belief, any picture of the alcoholic which leaves out this physical factor is incomplete."

Page xxiv, paragraph 2

"Don't drink and go to meetings." "Many of us felt we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."

Page 34, paragraph 2

"Whether such a person can quit upon a non-spiritual basis depends upon the extent to which he has already lost the power to choose whether he will drink or not."

Page 34, paragraph 3

"Unlike the feelings of the ship's passengers, however, our joy in escape from disaster does not subside as we go our individual ways. The feeling of having shared in a common peril is one element in the powerful cement which binds us. But that in itself would never have held us together as we are now joined."

Page 17, paragraph 2

"This is a selfish program."

"Our very lives, as ex-problem drinkers depend upon our constant thought of others and how we may help meet their needs."

Page 20, paragraph 1

"Helping others is the foundation stone of your recovery. A kindly act once in a while isn't enough. You have to act the Good Samaritan every day, if need be. It may mean the loss of many nights' sleep, great interference with your pleasures, interruptions to your business. It may mean sharing your money and your home, counseling frantic wives and relatives, innumerable trips to police courts, sanitariums, hospitals, jails and asylums. Your telephone may jangle at any time of the day or night. "

Page 97, paragraph 2

"For if an alcoholic failed to perfect and enlarge his spiritual life through work and self-sacrifice for others, he could not survive the certain trials and low spots ahead."

Page 14-15

"Selfishness, self-centeredness! That, we think, is the root of our troubles"

Page 62, paragraph 2

"So our troubles, we think, are basically of our own making. They arise out of ourselves, and the alcoholic is an extreme example of self-will run riot, though he usually doesn't think so. Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!"

Page 62, paragraph 3

"Meeting makers make it."

"Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery"

Page 59, paragraph 3

"I'm powerless over people, places, and things."

"We have recovered, and have been given the power to help others."

Page 132, paragraph 3

"Years of living with an alcoholic is almost sure to make any wife or child neurotic."

Page 122, paragraph 3

"The alcoholic is like a tornado roaring his way through the lives of others. Hearts are broken. Sweet relationships are dead. Affections have been uprooted. Selfish and inconsiderate habits have kept the home in turmoil. We feel a man is unthinking when he says that sobriety is enough."

Page 89, paragraph 2

"You can help when no one else can. You can secure their confidence when others fail."

Page 103, paragraph 2

"You're in the right place."

"Then we have a certain type of hard drinker. He may have the habit badly enough to gradually impair him physically and mentally. It may cause him to die a few years before his time. If a sufficiently strong reason - ill health, falling in love, change of environment, or the warning of a doctor - becomes operative, this man can also stop or moderate, although he may find it difficult and troublesome and may even need medical attention."

"If anyone who is showing inability to control his drinking can do the right- about-face and drink like a gentleman, our hats are off to him."

Page 20-21

"We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose

yourself. Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition."

Page 31, paragraph 2

"Your husband may be only a heavy drinker. His drinking may be constant or it may be heavy only on certain occasions. Perhaps he spends too much money for liquor. It may be slowing him up mentally and physically, but he does not see it. Sometimes he is a source of embarrassment to you and his friends. He is positive he can handle his liquor, that it does him no harm, that drinking is necessary in his business. He would probably be insulted if he were called an alcoholic. This world is full of people like him. Some will moderate or stop altogether, and some will not. Of those who keep on, a good number will become true alcoholics after a while."

Page 92, paragraph 2

"If you are satisfied that he is a real alcoholic."

"If he thinks he can do the job in some other way, or prefers some other spiritual approach, encourage him to follow his own conscience."

Page 95, paragraph 4:

"If an alcoholic wants to get sober, nothing you say can make him drink."

"A spirit of intolerance might repel alcoholics whose lives could have been saved, had it not been for such stupidity. We would not even do the cause of temperate drinking any good, for not one drinker in a thousand likes to be told anything about alcohol by one who hates it."

Page 103, paragraph 2

"We must change playmates, playgrounds, and playthings."

"Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do. People have said we must not go where liquor is served; we must not have it in our homes; we must shun friends who drink; we must avoid moving pictures which show drinking scenes; we must not go into bars; our friends must hide their bottles if we go to their houses; we mustn't think or be reminded about alcohol at all. Our experience shows that this is not necessarily so. We meet these conditions every day. An alcoholic who cannot meet them, still has an alcoholic mind; there is something the matter with his spiritual status. His only chance for sobriety would be some place like the Greenland Ice Cap, and even there an Eskimo might turn up with a bottle of scotch and ruin everything!"

Page 100-101

"I'm a people pleaser. I need to learn to take care of myself."

"Is he not really a self-seeker even when trying to be kind?"

Page 61, paragraph 2

"Don't drink, even if your ass falls off."

"Many of us felt we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."

Page 34, paragraph 2

"I haven't had a drink today, so I'm a complete success today."

"The elimination of drinking is but a beginning. A much more important demonstration of our principles lies before us in our respective homes, occupations and affairs."

Page 19, paragraph 1:

"It's my opinion that..." or "I don't know anything about the Big Book, but this is the way I do it..."

"We have concluded to publish an anonymous volume setting forth the problem as we see it. We shall bring to the task our combined experience and knowledge. This should suggest a useful program for anyone concerned with a drinking problem."

Page 19, paragraph 1:

"Don't drink, no matter what."

"Many of us felt we had plenty of character. There was a tremendous urge to cease forever. Yet we found it impossible. This is the baffling feature of alcoholism as we know it—this utter inability to leave it alone, no matter how great the necessity or the wish."

Page 34, paragraph 2

"We do not like to pronounce any individual as alcoholic, but you can quickly diagnose yourself. Step over to the nearest barroom and try some controlled drinking. Try to drink and stop abruptly. Try it more than once. It will not take long for you to decide, if you are honest with yourself about it. It may be worth a bad case of jitters if you get a full knowledge of your condition."

Page 31, paragraph 4

"We need to give up planning; it doesn't work."

"On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use. Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives. In thinking about our day we may face indecision."

We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while."

Page 86, paragraphs 3-4

"I have a choice to not drink today."

"We alcoholics are men and women who have lost the ability to control our drinking. We know that no real alcoholic ever recovers control. All of us felt at times that we were regaining control, but such intervals - usually brief - were inevitably followed by still less control, which led in time to pitiful and incomprehensible demoralization. We are convinced to a man that alcoholics of our type are in the grip of a progressive illness. Over any considerable period we get worse, never better."

Page 30, paragraph 3

"If all I do is stay sober today, then it's been a good day."

"Sometimes we hear an alcoholic say that the only thing he needs to do is to keep sober. Certainly he must keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn't. But he is yet a long way from making good to the wife or parents whom for years he has so shockingly treated."

Page 82, paragraph 3

"We feel a man is unthinking when he says sobriety is enough."

Page 82 paragraph 4

"You don't need a shrink. You have an alcoholic personality. All you will ever need is in the first 164 pages of the Big Book."

"But this does not mean that we disregard human health measures. God has abundantly supplied this world with fine doctors, psychologists, and practitioners of various kinds. Do not hesitate to take your health

problems to such persons. Most of them give freely of themselves, that their fellows may enjoy sound minds and bodies. Try to remember that though God has wrought miracles among us, we should never belittle a good doctor or psychiatrist. Their services are often indispensable in treating a newcomer and in following his case afterward."

Page 133, 2nd paragraph

"AA is the only way to stay sober."

"If he thinks he can do the job in some other way, or prefers some other spiritual approach, encourage him to follow his own conscience. We have no monopoly on God; we merely have an approach that worked with us."

page 95, paragraph 4:

"Our book is meant to be suggestive only. We realize we know only a little."

Page 164, paragraph 3

"My sponsor told me that, if in making an amend I would be harmed, I could consider myself as one of the 'others' in Step Nine."

"Reminding ourselves that we have decided to go to any lengths to find a spiritual experience, we ask that we be given strength and direction to do the right thing, no matter what the personal consequences might be."

" Page 79, paragraph 2

"I need to forgive myself first" or "You need to be good to yourself."

"The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others."

Page 74, paragraph 2

"Take what you want and leave the rest."

"The tremendous fact for every one of us is that we have discovered a common solution. We have a way out on which we can absolutely agree, and upon which we can join in brotherly and harmonious action. This is the great news

this book carries to those who suffer from alcoholism."

Page 17, paragraph 3:

"Just do the next right thing."

"We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision."

Page 86, paragraph 4:

"Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas."

Page 87, paragraph 1

"Don't make any major decisions for the first year."

"(a) – That we were alcoholic and could not manage our own lives.

(b) – That probably no human power could have relieved our alcoholism.

(c) – That God could and would if He were sought. Being convinced, we were at Step Three, which is that we decided to turn our will and our life over to God as we understood Him."

Page 60, paragraph 4

"When ready, we say something like this: "My Creator, I am now willing that you should have all of me, good and bad. I pray that you now remove from me every single defect of character which stands in the way of my usefulness to you and my fellows. Grant me strength, as I go out from here, to do your bidding. Amen." We have then completed Step Seven."

Page 76, paragraph 2

"Stay out of relationships for the first year!"

"We do not want to be the arbiter of anyone's sex conduct."

Page . 69, paragraph 1

"In meditation, we ask God what we should do about each specific matter. The right answer will come if we want it."

Page 69, paragraph 3:

"God alone can judge our sex situation."

Page 69, paragraph 4

"Counsel with other persons is often desirable, but we let God be the final judge."

Page 69-70

"We earnestly pray for the right ideal, for guidance in each questionable situation, for sanity, and for the strength to do the right thing."

Page 70, Paragraph 2

"Alcohol was my drug of choice."

"The fact is that most alcoholics, for reasons yet obscure, have lost the power of choice in drink."

Page 24, paragraph 2

"Keep coming back, eventually it will rub off on you."

"Though our decision was a vital and crucial step, it could have little permanent effect unless at once followed by a strenuous effort to face, and to be rid of, the things in ourselves which had been blocking us"

Page 64, Paragraph 1

"Ninety Meetings in Ninety Days."

"We meet frequently so that newcomers may find the fellowship they seek."

"Page 15, paragraph 2

"None of us makes a sole vocation of this work, nor do we think its effectiveness would be increased if we did."

Page 19, paragraph 2

"Here are the steps we took, which are suggested as a program of recovery"

Page 59, paragraph 3

"You only work one step a year." or "Take your time to work the steps."

"What often takes place in a few months can hardly be brought about by himself alone."

Page 569, paragraph 3

"Next we launched on a course of vigorous action."

Page 63, paragraph 3

"If that is so, this step may be postponed, only, however, if we hold ourselves in complete readiness to go through with it at the first opportunity"

Page 74, paragraph 2

"Returning home we find a place where we can be quiet for AN HOUR, carefully reviewing what we have done." "Make sure to put something good about yourself in your 4th step inventory."

Page 75, paragraph 3

"First, we searched out the flaws in our make-up which caused our failure."

Page 64 paragraph 3

"The inventory was ours, not the other man's. When we saw our faults we listed them."

Page 71 paragraph 1

"If you have already made a decision, and an inventory of your grosser handicaps, you have made a good beginning."

Page 67 paragraph 3

"You need to stay in those feelings and really feel them."

Page 84, paragraph 2

"When these crop up, we ask God at once to remove them."

Page. 125 paragraph 1

"So we think that unless some good and useful purpose is to be served, past occurrences should not be discussed."

"There are no musts in this program."

THE 37 MUSTS

"It must be done if any results are to be expected."

Page 99, paragraph 1

"We must try to repair the damage immediately lest we pay the penalty by a spree."

Page 99, paragraph 2

"It must be on a better basis, since the former did not work."

Page 99, paragraph 3

"Yes, there is a long period of reconstruction ahead. We must take the lead."

Page 83, paragraph 1

"We must remember that ten or twenty years of drunkenness would make a skeptic out of anyone."

Page 83, paragraph 2

"Those of us belonging to a religious denomination which requires confession must, and of course, will want to go to the properly appointed authority whose duty it is to receive it."

Page 74, paragraph 1

"The rule is we must be hard on ourself, but always considerate of others."

Page 74, paragraph 2

"But we must not use this as a mere excuse to postpone."

Page 75, paragraph 1

"But we must go further and that means more action."

Page 85, paragraph 3

"Every day is a day when we must carry the vision of God's will into all of our activities."

Page 85, paragraph 2

"These are thoughts which must go with us constantly."

Page 85, paragraph 2

"If we have obtained permission, have consulted with others, asked God to help and the drastic step is indicated we must not shrink."

Page 80, paragraph 1

"I must turn in all things to the Father of Light who presides over us all."

Page 14, paragraph 2

"Above everything, we alcoholics must be rid of this selfishness. We must, or it kills us!"

Page 62, paragraph 3

"The man must decide for himself."

Page 144, paragraph 3

"To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends - this is an experience you must not miss."

Page 89, paragraph 2

"If we are planning to stop drinking, there must be no reservation of any kind"

Page 33, paragraph 3

"We must not shrink at anything."

Page 79, paragraph 2

"But we must be careful not to drift into worry, remorse or morbid reflection, for that would diminish our usefulness to others."

Page 86, paragraph 2

"He must redouble his spiritual activities if he expects to survive."

Page 120, paragraph 2

"I know I must get along without liquor, but how can I?"

Page 152, paragraph 2

"He must decide for himself whether he wants to go on"

Page 95, paragraph 3

"If he is to find God, the desire must come from within."

Page 95, paragraph 3

"Though they knew they must help other alcoholics if they would remain sober, that motive became secondary."

Page 159, paragraph 3

"Both saw that they must keep spiritually active. "

Page 156, paragraph 3

"That is where our work must be done."

Page 130, paragraph 2

"Certainly he must keep sober, for there will be no home if he doesn't."

Page 82, paragraph 3

"He should understand that he must undergo a change of heart"

Page 143, paragraph 2

"Whatever our ideal turns out to be, we must be willing to grow toward it."

Page 69, paragraph 4

"We must be willing to make amends where we have done harm"

Page 69, paragraph 4

"We had to face the fact that we must find a spiritual basis of life - or else."

Page 44, paragraph 3

"We must lose our fear of creditors no matter how far we have to go, for we are liable to drink if we are afraid to face them."

Page 78, paragraph 3

"To be vital, faith must be accompanied by self-sacrifice and unselfish, constructive action."

Page 93, paragraph 3

"His defense must come from a Higher Power."

Page 43, paragraph 4

"We saw that these resentments must be mastered"

Page 66, paragraph 4

*"For he knows he must be honest if he would
live at all."*

Page 146, paragraph 4

*"We must be entirely honest with somebody if
we expect to live long or happily in this world."*

Page 73, paragraph 5:

But Remember...

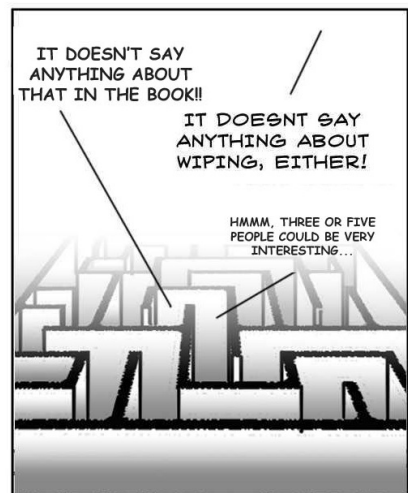
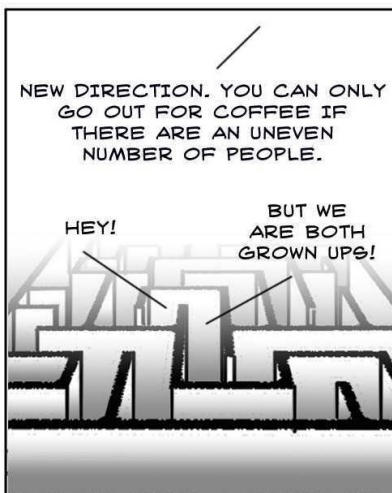
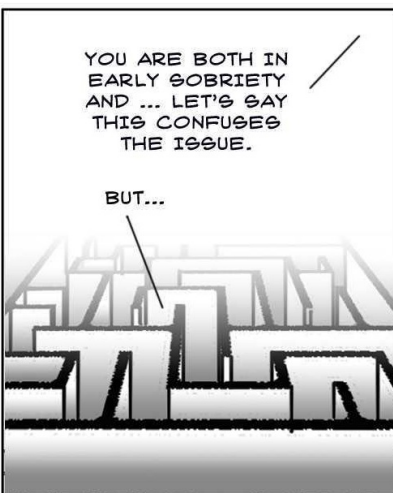
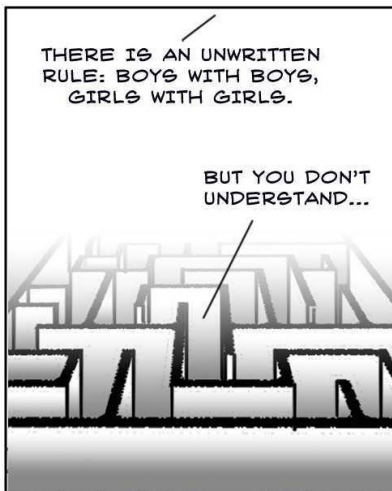
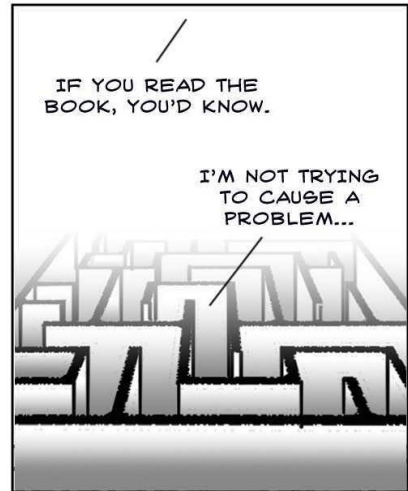
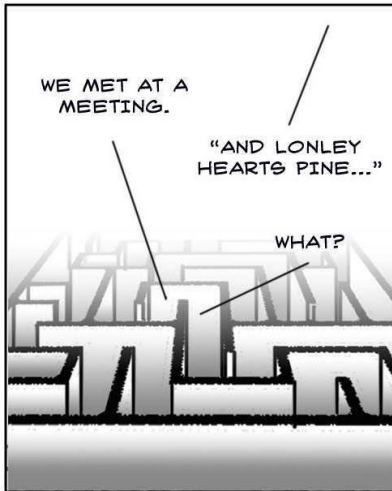
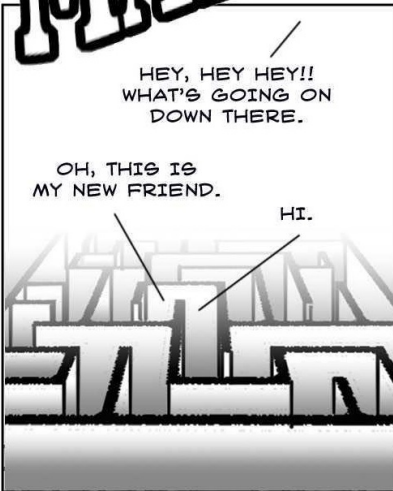
*"When the man is presented with this volume it
is best that no one tell him he must abide by its
suggestions."*

Page 144, paragraph 3

MAZEING RECOVERY

THE RULE

BY JOE A.



109 Promises

How many promises await us as we trudge this road of happy destiny? Some folks think they are limited to those following Step 9 on page 83. There are 20 there (not the 12 often mentioned). But you will find promises for each step and in many other places as well. We are sure you want to know what they are.

Thanks to Buddy T. at About.com we were referred to the Big Book Comes Alive website, which lists their version of 147 Big Book promises. We have not yet added from their list to ours the missing promises that meet our promise criteria.

However, there is a price to pay for reading on. You must contact us with additional promises from inside the front cover through page 164. Here are well over 100 presented as of today:

Promises of Step Two

1) *There is a solution. Almost none of us liked the self-searching, the leveling of our pride, the confession of short-comings which the process requires for its successful consummation. But we saw that it really worked in others, and we had come to believe in the hopelessness and futility of life as we had been living it. When, therefore, we were approached by those in whom the problem had been solved, there was nothing left for us but to pick up the simple kit of spiritual tools laid at our feet.*

2) *We have found much of heaven and*

3) *we have been rocketed into a fourth dimension of existence of which we had not even dreamed.*

4) *The great fact is just this, and nothing less: That we have had deep and effective spiritual experiences which have revolutionized our whole attitude toward life, toward our fellows and toward God's universe.*

5) *The central fact of our lives today is the absolute certainty that our Creator has entered into our hearts and lives in a way which is indeed miraculous.*

6) *He has commenced to accomplish those things for us which we could never do by ourselves.*

Big Book page 25

7) *Here and there, once in a while, alcoholics have had what are called vital spiritual experiences. To me these occurrences are phenomena. They appear to be in the nature of huge emotional displacements and rearrangements.*

8) *Ideas, emotions, and attitudes which were once the guiding forces of the lives of these men are suddenly cast to one side,*

9) *and a completely new set of conceptions and motives begin to dominate them.*

Big Book page 27:

10) *We, in our turn, sought the same escape with all the desperation of drowning men. What seemed at first a flimsy reed, has proved to be the loving and powerful hand of God.*

- 11) *A new life has been given us or, if you prefer, "a design for living" that really works.*

Big Book page 28

Much to our relief, we discovered we did not need to consider another's conception of God.

- 12) *Our own conception, however inadequate, was sufficient to make the approach*

- 13) *and to effect a contact with Him.*

- 14) *As soon as we admitted the possible existence of a Creative Intelligence, a Spirit of the Universe underlying the totality of things, we began to be possessed of a new sense of power and direction, provided we took other simple steps.*

- 15) *We found that God does not make too hard terms with those who seek Him.*

- 16) *To us, the Realm of Spirit is broad, roomy, all inclusive; never exclusive or forbidding to those who earnestly seek.*

- 17) *It is open, we believe, to all men.*

Big Book page 46

- 18) *Do not let any prejudice you may have against spiritual terms deter you from honestly asking yourself what they mean to you. At the start, this was all we needed to commence spiritual growth, to effect our first conscious relation with God as we understood Him.*

- 19) *Afterward, we found ourselves accepting many things which then seemed entirely out of reach.*

- 20) *That was growth, but if we wished to grow we had to begin somewhere. So we used our own conception, however limited it was. We needed to ask ourselves but one short question. "Do I now believe, or am I even willing to believe, that there is a Power greater than myself?" As soon as a man can say that he does believe, or is willing to believe, we emphatically assure him that he is on his way.*

- 21) *It has been repeatedly proven among us that upon this simple cornerstone a wonderfully effective spiritual structure can be built.*

Big Book page 47

- 22) *Faced with alcoholic destruction, we soon became as open minded on spiritual matters as we had tried to be on other questions. In this respect alcohol was a great persuader.*

- 23) *It finally beat us into a state of reasonableness. Sometimes this was a tedious process; we hope no one else will be prejudiced for as long as some of us were.*

Big Book page 48

- 24) *Here are thousands of men and women, worldly indeed. They flatly declare that since they have come to believe in a Power greater than themselves, to take a certain attitude toward the Power, and to do certain simple things, there has been a revolutionary change in their way of living and thinking.*

- 25) *In the face of collapse and despair, in the face of the total failure of their human resources, they found that a new power, peace, happiness, and sense of direction flowed into them.*

- 26) *This happened soon after they whole-heartedly met a few simple requirements. Once confused and baffled by the seeming futility of existence, they show the underlying reasons why they were making heavy going of life. Leaving aside the drink question, they tell why living was so unsatisfactory. They show how the change came over them. When many hundreds of people are able to say that the consciousness of the Presence of God is today the most important fact of their lives, they present a powerful reason why one should have faith.*

Big Book page 50

- 27) *We finally saw that faith in some kind of God was a part of our make-up, just as much as the feeling we have for a friend. Sometimes we had to search fearlessly, but He was there. He was as*

much a fact as we were. We found the Great Reality deep down within us. In the last analysis it is only there that He may be found. It was so with us.

Big Book page 55

28) *Even so has God restored us all to our right minds. To this man, the revelation was sudden. Some of us grow into it more slowly.*

29) *But He has come to all who have honestly sought Him.*

30) *When we drew near to Him He disclosed Himself to us!*

Contributed by Joe Mc.

Big Book page 57

Promises of Step Three

31) *When we sincerely took such a position, all sort of remarkable things followed.*

32) *We had a new Employer.*

33) *He provided what we needed, if we kept close to Him and performed His work well.*

34) *Established on such a footing we became less and less interested in ourselves, our little plans and designs.*

35) *More and more we became interested in seeing what we could contribute to life.*

36) *As we felt new power flow in,*

37) *as we enjoyed peace of mind,*

38) *as we discovered we could face life successfully,*

39) *as we became conscious of His presence,*

40) *we began to lose our fear of today, tomorrow or the hereafter.*

41) *We were reborn.*

42) *an effect, sometimes a very great one, was felt at once.*

Contributed by Kay G. and Jon T.

Big Book page 63

43) *At once, we commence to outgrow fear.*

Contributed by Kay G.

Big Book page #68.

43a) *We have begun to learn tolerance, patience and good will toward all men, even our enemies, for we look on them as sick people.*

Contributed by Tom T. of Omaha.

Big Book page #70.

Promises of Step Five

Once we have taken this step, withholding nothing,

44) *we are delighted.*

45) *We can look the world in the eye.*

46) *We can be alone at perfect peace and ease.*

47) *Our fears fall from us.*

48) *We begin to feel the nearness of our Creator.*

49) *We may have had certain spiritual beliefs, but now we begin to have a spiritual experience.*

50) *The feeling that the drink problem has disappeared will often come strongly.*

51) *We feel we are on the Broad Highway, walking hand in hand with the Spirit of the Universe.*

Big Book page 75

Promises of Step Eight

52) *If our manner is calm, frank, and open, we will be gratified with the result.*

53) *In nine cases out of ten the unexpected happens. Sometimes the man we are calling upon admits his own faults,*

54) *so feuds of years' standing melt away in an hour.*

55) *Rarely do we fail to make satisfactory progress. Our*

56) *former enemies sometimes praise what we are doing and wish us well.*

57) Occasionally, they will offer assistance.

Big Book page 78

Promises of Step Nine

If we are painstaking about this phase of our development,

58) *we will be amazed before we are half way through.*

59) *We are going to know a new freedom*

60) *and a new happiness.*

61) *We will not regret the past*

62) *nor wish to shut the door on it.*

63) *We will comprehend the word serenity and*

64) *we will know peace.*

65) *No matter how far down the scale we have gone, we will see how our experience can benefit others.*

66) *That feeling of uselessness (will disappear)*

67) *and self-pity will disappear.*

68) *We will lose interest in selfish things and*

69) *(We will) gain interest in our fellows.*

70) *Self-seeking will slip away.*

71) *Our whole attitude and outlook upon life will change.*

72) *Fear of people (will leave us) and*

73) *(fear) of economic insecurity will leave us.*

74) *We will intuitively know how to handle situations which used to baffle us.*

75) *We will suddenly realize that God is doing for us what we could not do for ourselves.*

76) *Are these extravagant promises? We think not. They are being fulfilled among us—sometimes quickly, sometimes slowly.*

77) *They will always materialize if we work for them.*

Big Book page 83

Promises of Step Ten

64) *And we have ceased fighting anything or anyone—even alcohol.*

65) *For by this time sanity will have returned.*

66) *We will seldom be interested in liquor.*

67) *If tempted, we recoil from it as from a hot flame.*

68) *We react sanely and normally, and*

69) *we will find that this has happened automatically.*

70) *We will see that our new attitude toward liquor has been given us without any thought or effort on our part. It just comes! That is the miracle of it.*

71) *We are not fighting it,*

72) *neither are we avoiding temptation.*

73) *We feel as though we had been placed in a position of neutrality—safe and protected.*

74) *We have not even sworn off. Instead, the problem has been removed. It does not exist for us.*

75) *We are neither cocky nor are we afraid.*

76) *That is our experience. That is how we react so long as we keep in fit spiritual condition.*

Big Book page 84

Promises of Step Eleven

On awakening let us think about the twenty-four hours ahead. We consider our plans for the day. Before we begin, we ask God to direct our thinking, especially asking that it be divorced from self-pity, dishonest or self-seeking motives. Under these conditions

77) *we can employ our mental faculties with assurance, for after all God gave us brains to use.*

78) *Our thought-life will be placed on a much higher plane when our thinking is cleared of wrong motives.*

79) *In thinking about our day we may face indecision. We may not be able to determine which course to take. Here we ask God for inspiration, an intuitive thought or a decision. We relax and take it easy. We don't struggle. We are often surprised how the right answers come after we have tried this for a while.*

Big Book page 86

80) *What used to be the hunch or the occasional inspiration gradually becomes a working part of the mind.*

81) *Being still inexperienced and having just made conscious contact with God, it is not probable that we are going to be inspired at all times. We might pay for this presumption in all sorts of absurd actions and ideas. Nevertheless, we find that our thinking will, as time passes, be more and more on the plane of inspiration.*

82) *We come to rely upon it.*

83) *We are careful never to pray for our own selfish ends. Many of us have wasted a lot of time doing that and it doesn't work. You can easily see why.*

As we go through the day we pause, when agitated or doubtful, and ask for the right thought or action. We constantly remind ourselves we are no longer running the show, humbly saying to ourselves many times each day "Thy will be done."

84) *We are then in much less danger of excitement,*

85) *fear,*

86) *anger,*

87) *worry,*

88) *self-pity,*

89) *or foolish decisions.*

90) *We become much more efficient.*

91) *We do not tire so easily, for we are not burning up energy foolishly as we did when we were trying to arrange life to suit ourselves.*

92) *It works—it really does.*

Big Book page 87

93) *Practical experience shows that nothing will so much insure immunity from drinking as intensive work with other alcoholics. It works when other activities fail.*

94) *You can help when no one else can.*

95) *You can secure their confidence when others fail.*

96) *Life will take on new meaning.*

97) *To watch people recover, to see them help others, to watch loneliness vanish, to see a fellowship grow up about you, to have a host of friends—this is an experience you must not miss. We know you will not want to miss it. Frequent contact with newcomers and with each other is the bright spot of our lives.*

Big Book page 97

Promises of Step Twelve

98) *Both you and the new man must walk day by day in the path of spiritual progress. If you persist, remarkable things will happen.*

Contributed by Kate O.

99) *When we look back, we realize that the things which came to us when we put ourselves in God's hands were better than anything we could have planned.*

Contributed by Kate O.

100) *Follow the dictates of a Higher Power and you will presently live in a new and wonderful world, no matter what your present circumstances!*

Contributed by Beth

101) *Assuming we are spiritually fit, we can do all sorts of things alcoholics are not supposed to do.*

Contributed by Kate O.

Big Book page 100

102) *Your job now is to be at the place where you may be of maximum helpfulness to others, so never hesitate to go anywhere if you can be helpful. You should not hesitate to visit the most sordid spot on earth on such an errand. Keep on the firing line of life with these motives and God will keep you unharmed.*

Contributed by Beth

103) *The power of God goes deep!*

Contributed by Kate O.

Big Book page 102

104) *But sometimes you must start life anew. We know women who have done it. If such women*

adopt a spiritual way of life their road will be smoother.

Contributed by Kate O.

Big Book page 114

105) *how much better life is when lived on a spiritual plane.*

Contributed by Kate O.

Big Book page 116

106) *These work-outs should be regarded as part of your education, for thus you will be learning to live.*

107) *You will make mistakes, but if you are in earnest they will not drag you down.*

108) *Instead, you will capitalize them.*

109) *A better way of life will emerge when they are overcome.*

Contributed by Kate O.

Big Book page #117:

Sponsorship

by Clarence Snyder, 1944

This is slightly edited from the first pamphlet ever written concerning sponsorship. It was written by Clarence H. Snyder in early 1944. Its original title was to be "AA Sponsorship ... Its Obligations and Its Responsibilities." It was printed by the Cleveland Central Committee under the title; "AA Sponsorship... Its Opportunities and Its Responsibilities."

The masculine form is used throughout for simplicity, although it is intended to include women as well.

The guide was written for the original concept of the 12-Step Call, where the recovering members would accept the invitation of the family or prospective member or seek out those with drinking problems from local doctors (before HIPPA prevented revealing anything about a patient's medical condition). Many of the points still apply to talking with the likely candidate through whatever source they may be contacted.

Preface

Each member of Alcoholics Anonymous is a potential sponsor of a new member and should clearly recognize the obligations and duties of such responsibility.

The acceptance of an opportunity to take the AA plan to a sufferer of alcoholism entails very real and critically important responsibilities. Each member, undertaking the sponsorship of a fellow alcoholic, must remember that he is offering what

is frequently the last chance of rehabilitation, sanity, or maybe life itself.

Happiness, Health, Security, Sanity, and Life of human beings are the things we hold in the balance when we sponsor an alcoholic.

No member among us is wise enough to develop a sponsorship program that can be successfully applied in every case. However, in the following pages, we have outlined a suggested procedure, which supplemented by the member's own experience, has proven successful.

Personal Gains of Being a Sponsor

No one reaps full benefit from any fellowship he is connected with unless he wholeheartedly engages in its important activities. The expansion of Alcoholics Anonymous to wider fields of greater benefit to more people results directly from the addition of new, worthwhile members or associates.

Any AA who has not experienced the joys and satisfaction of helping another alcoholic regain his place in life has not yet fully realized the complete benefits of this fellowship.

On the other hand, it must be clearly kept in mind that the only possible reason for bringing an alcoholic into AA is for that person's gain. Sponsorship should never be undertaken to:

1. Increase the size of the group
2. For personal satisfaction and glory

3. Because the sponsor feels it his duty to remake the world

Until an individual has assumed the responsibility of setting a shaking, helpless human being back on the path toward becoming a healthy, useful member of society, he has not enjoyed the complete thrill of being an AA.

Source of Names

Most people have among their own friends and acquaintances someone who would benefit from our teachings. Others have names given to them by their church, by their doctor, by their employer, or by some other member, who cannot make a direct contact.

Because of the wide range of the AA activities, the names often come from unusual and unexpected places.

These cases should be contacted as soon as all facts such as: marital status, domestic relations, financial status, drink habits, employment status, and others readily obtainable, are at hand.

Is the Prospect a Candidate?

Much time and effort can be saved by learning as soon as possible if:

1. The man* really has a drinking problem?
2. Does he know he has a problem?
3. Does he want to do something about his drinking?
4. Does he want help?

Sometimes the answers to these questions cannot be made until the prospect has had some AA instruction and an opportunity to think. Often we are given names, which upon investigation, show the prospect is in no sense an alcoholic or is satisfied with his present plan of living. We should not hesitate to drop these names from our lists. However, be sure to let the man know where he can reach us at a later date.

Who Should Become Members

AA is a fellowship of men and women bound together by their inability to use alcohol in any form sensibly, or with profit or pleasure. Obviously, any new members introduced should be the same kind of people, suffering from the same disease.

Most people can drink reasonably, but we are only interested in those who cannot. Party drinkers, social drinkers, celebrators, and others who continue to have more pleasure than pain from their drinking, are of no interest to us.

In some instances, an individual might believe himself to be a social drinker when he definitely is an alcoholic. In many such cases, more time must pass before that person is ready to accept our program. Rushing such a man before he is ready might ruin his chances of ever becoming a successful AA. Do not ever deny future help by pushing too hard in the beginning.

Some people, although definitely alcoholic, have no desire or ambition to better their way of living, and until they do, AA has nothing to offer them.

Experience has shown that age, intelligence, education, background, or the amount of liquor drunk, has little, if any, bearing on whether or not the person is an alcoholic.

Presenting the Plan

In many cases, a man's physical condition is such that he should be placed in a hospital, if at all possible. Many AA members believe hospitalization, with ample time for the prospect to think and plan his future, free from domestic and business worries, offers distinct advantage. In many cases, the hospitalization period marks the beginning of a new life. Other members are equally confident that any man who desires to learn the AA plan for living can do it in his own home or while engaged in normal occupation.

Thousands of cases are treated in each manner and have proved satisfactory.

Suggested Steps

The following paragraphs outline a suggested procedure for presenting the AA plan to the prospect, at home or in the hospital.

Qualify as an Alcoholic

In calling upon a new prospect, it has been found best to qualify oneself as an ordinary person who has found happiness, contentment, and peace of mind through AA.

Immediately make it clear to the prospect that you are a person engaged in the routine business of earning a living. Tell him your only reason for believing yourself able to help him is because you, yourself, are an alcoholic and have had experiences and problems that might be similar to his.

Tell Your Story*

Many members have found it desirable to launch immediately into their personal drinking story as a means of getting the confidence and wholehearted cooperation of the prospect.

It is important in telling the story of your drinking life to tell it in a manner that will describe an alcoholic, rather than a series of humorous drunken parties. This will enable the man to get a clear picture of an alcoholic, which should help him to more definitively decide whether he is an alcoholic.

Inspire Confidence in AA

In many instances, the prospect will have tried various means of controlling his drinking, including hobbies, church, changes of residence, change of associations, and various control plans. These will, of course, have been unsuccessful. Point out your series of unsuccessful efforts to control drinking, their absolute fruitless results,

and yet, you were able to stop drinking through application of AA principles. This will encourage the prospect to look forward, with confidence, to sobriety in AA in spite of the many past failures he might have had with other plans.

Talk About “Plus” Values

Tell the prospect frankly that he cannot quickly understand all the benefits that are coming to him through AA. Tell him of the happiness, peace of mind, health, and in many cases, material benefits that are possible through understanding and application of the AA way of life.

Show Importance of Reading Our Book

Explain the necessity of reading and rereading the AA book. Point out that this book gives a detailed description of the AA tools, and the suggested methods of application using these tools to build a foundation of rehabilitation for living. This is a good time to emphasize the importance of the twelve steps and the four absolutes.

Qualities Required for Success in AA*

Convey to the prospect that the objectives of AA are to provide the ways and means for an alcoholic to regain his normal place in life. Desire, patience, faith, study, and application are most important in determining each individual's plan of action in gaining full benefits of AA.

Introduce Faith

Since the belief of a Power greater than oneself is the heart of the AA plan, and since this idea is very often difficult for a new man, the sponsor should attempt to introduce the beginnings of an understanding of this all-important feature.

Frequently, this can be done by the sponsor relating his own difficulty in grasping a spiritual understanding and the methods he used to overcome his difficulties.

Listen to His Story

While talking to the newcomer, take time to listen and study his reactions in order that you can present your information in a more effective manner. Let him talk too. Remember – Easy Does It.

Take to Several Meetings

To give the new member a broad and complete picture of AA, the sponsor should take him to various meetings within convenient distance of his home. Attending several meetings gives a new man a chance to select a group in which he will be most happy and comfortable. It is extremely important to let the prospect make his own decision as to which group he will join. Impress upon him that he is always welcome at any meeting and can change his home group if he so wishes.

Explain AA to Prospect's Family

A successful sponsor takes pains and makes any required effort to make certain that those people closest and with the greatest interest in their prospect (mother, father, wife, etc.) are fully informed of AA, its principles and its objectives. The sponsor sees that these people are invited to meetings and keeps them in touch with the current situation regarding the prospect at all times.

Help Prospect Anticipate Hospital Experience

A prospect will gain more benefit from a hospitalization period if the sponsor describes the experience and helps him anticipate it, paving the way for those members who will call on him.

Consult Older Members in AA

These suggestions for sponsoring a new man in AA teachings are by no means complete. They are intended only for a framework and general guide. Each individual case is different and should be treated as such. Additional information for sponsoring a new man can be obtained from the experience of older men in the work. A co-sponsor, with an experienced and newer member working on a prospect, has proven very satisfactory.

Before undertaking the responsibility of sponsoring, a member should make certain that he is able and prepared to give the time, effort, and thought such an obligation entails. It might be that he will want to select a co-sponsor to share the responsibility, or he might feel it necessary to ask another to assume the responsibility for the man he has located.

-- Clarence H. Snyder

**IF YOU ARE GOING TO BE A SPONSOR
– BE A GOOD ONE!**

Zen and the Art of Sponsorship

*"God, Make me a
Channel of Thy Peace..."*

-- St. Francis Prayer

To be a channel is to allow what is being channeled to flow through. If it is water, it must include input and outflow. In Sponsorship, it must provide the principles as received into your life through your Sponsor, your experience within the Program, and carrying that message to those you would sponsor.

How to Not Know

The most difficult answer for any alcoholic is "I don't know," but it is "not knowing" that opens the possibility of learning. Even the answer that was perfect yesterday may not be the right answer for today.

Your sponsee will learn more about truth if you say "I don't know, let's find someone with experience with that," and you seek the answer with your sponsee. If you search together through the tools available to you - through prayer, literature, the fellowship, and professional sources - your sponsee will learn how to find an answer by experience and improvisation.

To "not know" is to agree to be a student and makes it possible for you and your sponsee to learn from your Higher Power.

"Not Knowing" how to live without a drink brought you to your Recovery. Recognition of your own limits and the willingness to find the new answer will improve your own recovery and offer your Sponsee

Some groups and sponsors use "Rev. Mychal's Prayer"

"God, take away everything

I think I know about you

and About me, and

teach me."

Essential Sponsorship

Sponsorship is a concept of one member of the program helping another member of the program through the process of the Steps and applying those Steps and principles into their daily life.

Sponsorship requires the ability to see the Now and use the Program to help the sponsee (sometimes called "pigeon," "baby," "cookie," or "protégé") to move through the recovery process using the Twelve Steps.

Essential Improvisation

Improvisation is a specific way of approaching theater, based on the book "Improvisation for the Theatre" by Viola Spolin. Today, improvisation is best known through improv comedy, such as Saturday Night Live or The Second City.

The essence of improvisation is always to support - never deny -- what came before. There is no "one size fits all" philosophy and there are countless ways to successfully carry the message to your Sponsee.

An attitude of Improvisation will allow you to take whatever progress the Sponsee makes with the Steps and application of those Steps to his/her

life as a way to learn the lesson before you, and then move on and move forward.

Essential Zen

Zen is defined by the Free Online Dictionary as “Buddhist doctrine that enlightenment can be attained through direct intuitive insight.” Zen is not a religion. Zen is an approach based on recognition of the moment, the immediate moment, the “Now.”

Sponsorship is the challenge of matching the experience of the Sponsor with the situation of the Sponsee. Zen requires that you be focused on the Now, the Sponsee’s actions, and the tools of the Program, to eliminate the Actions that created the current situation, clean up the baggage of the past which interferes with life in the Now, and the Action required for the personal change Recovery demands.

Improvisation requires the Sponsor be armed with information and a wide variety of specific examples and answers that address the need of the Now. In the Big Book, it says “obviously you can’t carry something you haven’t got,” so it is necessary

that the Sponsor become saturated in varieties of material available in addition to the Sponsor’s own experience.

The combination of Sponsorship, Zen, and Improvisation allows the Sponsor to listen to the Sponsee, respond in a way that includes the “yes, and...” of Improv, and direct the Sponsee into new action to correct the actions and use the available tools, meetings, fellowship, prayer, literature, and phone - whatever suits the moment.

Over-prepare

Get into your Program as never before. You will benefit and you will be amazed at how themes you find in reading, listening to speakers, attending discussion meetings, and conversations with other people in the Program will tie into the obstacles and questions in the “Now” of your sponsee and yourself.

For New Sponsors

So, someone has asked you to be their Sponsor. What do you do?

First, remember you cannot carry something you haven't got. Do you have a Sponsor? Your ability to share with a new prospect is limited to your own experience, so you cannot show a newcomer how to work with a sponsor if you do not work with a Sponsor.

Call your Sponsor as soon as someone asks you and whimper, "What do I do?" Your Sponsor is your best guide to being a Sponsor.

Do you have a network of people in the Program that you can discuss your life and options in recovery? Do you continue to do step work with your sponsor, even after years of sobriety? Do you have a spiritual life? Will you be able to share what you have with the newcomer, even if they are not of the same faith as you?

The experience of a Sponsor and Sponsee working together is unique and should be between equals, one of whom has more experience in Recovery than the other. It is a close teacher / student relationship that may evolve into a friendship, but it is not necessary to become friends for successful Sponsorship.

Being a Sponsor does not mean you are superior to the newcomer – just someone who is a little further along the path than the Sponsee and willing to share what you've done.

A Sponsor helps the Sponsee understand the basics of the Program and works the Sponsee

through the Steps (particularly the 4th and 5th Steps).

A Sponsor shares basic information in the Big Book, most often by sitting together, to go through the first 181 pages out loud, defining the words and concepts to make the Sponsee aware of the tools being laid at his feet.

What a Sponsor is Not

A sponsor is not a bank. Loaning or borrowing money between a sponsor and a sponsee can taint the relationship. The two of you will talk about financial issues, but money can ruin what could be a working relationship that could help both.

A sponsor is not a taxi service. A sponsor may take a sponsee to meetings, particularly to the Sponsor's Home Group, but the sponsee should be encouraged to develop a new network of people in the Program for rides and discussion.

A sponsor is not a counselor. That means marriage- or employment-counselor. You will discuss the sponsee's issues and problems, but you do not have any authority other than your own experience and background in the Steps. Even if you are a licensed counselor, this is not a professional relationship.

A sponsor is not a therapist. Again, even if the sponsor is a licensed therapist, this is not a professional relationship. The Sponsor's job is to help the newcomer through Recovery using the Steps, and the principles in daily living are the focus of the Sponsor and Sponsee. This will cover

areas of money, relationships, employment, sex, desire, defects, and spiritual life.

A Sponsor is not Perfect

No one in our Program has attained perfection, but progress is our ongoing goal. You may make mistakes, but learn from them and share with your Sponsee how mistakes can be used as part of the lessons required for Recovery.

What your Sponsee sees you do is every bit as important as anything you say.

If you do not know something, be honest. Your willingness to seek an answer for something you do not know can be a powerful lesson for your prospect.

Successful Sponsorship

Having a Sponsor or being a Sponsor does not guarantee that the prospect will stay sober.

If your Sponsee goes out and starts drinking again, find someone else to work with who may want what you have to offer.

If you stay sober, the Sponsorship has been effective.

If your Sponsee stays sober, it is not because of your wonderful Sponsorship. It is because you have helped the Sponsee to find and develop his spiritual awakening and personal relationship to a

For New Speakers

So, you have been asked to speak as a sober member of Alcoholics Anonymous. Congratulations! You've seen it done a hundred times, but how do you get up there to deliver a message of your experience, strength, and hope.

This is simply one member's attempt to share Experience, Strength, and Hope with someone else, regardless of how many listeners he or she may have. A member speaking for the first time, or who wants to reexamine how they present their story when they speak to a group, might benefit from a few words from those with previous experience.

WHAT DO YOU SAY?

First, introduce yourself. You may choose to say your first name or your full name. Give your sobriety date and the information for your Home Group.

In the Big Book ("Alcoholics Anonymous"), we are told that we are to carry the message and a speaker needs to be clear on what his/her message is. In its simplest form, that message will be "This works."

Your talk should be broken into the three basic phases; "What it was like...", "What Happened...", and "What it is Like Now." It is not the purpose of your talk to explain everything – you won't be able to do that. But you will take some key moments from your story to share. This will include the items under the "What it was like...", "What Happened...", and "What it is Like Now." You may

want to mention if you have had previous bouts of sobriety.

PREPARATION

You really do not need to write a script for everything you are going to say. A simple list of words will remind you what you want to say and in some approximate order that makes sense to you. You will have this list to remind you what you want to say, and then be able to tell that part of your story like you were telling the story to some friends.

Because, you are.

Many speakers do a short prayer before they talk, sometimes alone in the bathroom or a quiet place, sometimes at the beginning of their talk. The best public prayer I have heard is a variation on Fr. Mychal's Prayer.

*"God, take away everything
I think I know about you,
and take away everything
I think I know about me
And teach me."*

LANGUAGE

The book says "We will tell, in our own words..." and no one can tell you what you cannot say. Well, some may try, but their authority is to tell you what they have done, not their theories on forbidden language.

But in the Raleigh area there is a sign some meetings use, "A lack of profanity offends no one."

My language was rough when I arrived in the south. And my story included a lot of the language I used in the streets. After a talk where my sponsor's wife had brought a friend to hear what I had to say, she could only remember that I had used the Queen-Mother of swear words in my talk. My sponsor's wife came up to me to suggest I watch my language.

So I became righteous and brought up the direction from the book, "We will tell, in our own words..." She agreed. "It also says you are to carry the message, and people won't hear the message if you are offending them."

At first I wanted to justify my language but realized that speaking was not about me and how wonderful I was. I was told to carry the message and voluntarily began restricting my language. The result was a better talk about the Program and what it has given me.

You have to make up your own mind.

WHO ARE YOU TALKING TO?

First, remember who you are talking to. A room full of alcoholics are going to be far too self-involved to bother noticing much of what you are saying. In fact, there may be only a small number of people who are really listening – and you will never know who that is. You may be fooled that the folks who are sitting in the front, bright-eyed and apparently paying attention, are the people who will really get your message.

But don't be too sure of that. Sometimes you may plant a seed that won't take root for months or years, but something from your story may sink in with someone who is new, or who has been around for a while, secretly suffering and ready to try something desperate – like using someone else's story to apply our Program to their own life.

GET SOBER QUICKLY

Many speakers take the opportunity to tell war stories, and some of the things we have done are exactly what give us the authority of experience.

But some never leave the "and I go so drunk that I..." phase - you risk the newcomer leaving the meeting wondering if you ever got sober.

Whatever the length of time you have to talk, we offer this guideline

Try to keep your personal drunk-a-log down to 1/3 of the available time. "We will tell you what we were like..." does not mean talk about your career as a budding alcoholic all night. So, if you are speaking for 45 minutes, no more than 15 minutes for your drunk stories. With 30 minutes, you need no more than 10 minutes of drunk stories.

THE BEGINNING OF YOUR OWN SOBRIETY

The "What happened..." phase of your talk should run no more than 1/3 of the total time, but may be less if you hit a solid bottom and only had to have one sobriety date. With more than one sobriety date you may want to share on why you had to change your date.

BENEFITS

Sometimes a speaker will only talk about the struggles he/she must face in sobriety. Many of us have to share that we are not examples of success with jobs or relationship or behavior.

But never forget that you are talking to a room full of people who already know how to suffer.

Talk about your story in Recovery. Share how you worked your Steps, tell your Home Group, your Sponsor, your Inventory, and Step Work. Share the personal pain that finally gave you the desire to stop drinking. Really!

Your honesty will reach your audience. To stand there and visibly be better than the drunk you are describing will carry a message.

Do not share on Steps or problems you have not had. No one needs more theory. You are there to carry the message of how the actions you have taken – how using the Big Book, the Steps, your Sponsor, and the other tools – have taken you to this new place in your life.

Do not be afraid to share your real past, but do not involve the names or positions of other people in your story by name. You are telling your story, not theirs.

If you have a secret you learned to give up, you are not required to tell that secret from the podium. No one can make that decision but you. If you can share a past secret, it may carry a stronger message to someone in your audience who may need to hear how you found freedom from the poison of secrets.

Tell them how the Program has given what nothing else has. Talk about feeling at peace inside your own skin. Share healing you have experienced, changes in your relationships (family, friends, or work) or health.

Avoid presenting your story so that getting a new car, a new job, or more money as the reward of working your Program. People can become confused with the benefits of the program and material things. Your job is to share your message, your recovery, offer a solution, and “the” result of our Program.

“Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps...”

Step 10

Above all, talk of your hope and belief that the Program succeeded where nothing else could. Share your sense that you felt it would not work for you but that it brought you to where you are now and your hope for the future.

TOOLS STEPS AND SERVICE

Try to include how you have used the Steps and Tools of the Program (meetings, fellowship, literature, sponsor, etc.):

- *Meetings*
- *Fellowship*
- *Sponsorship*
- *Phone*
- *Literature*
- *Writing*

• *Steps and Steps and Steps*

Talk about Service and how it has affected your recovery. Keep it within your own experience and tell how you have done service. This can include carrying meetings into institutions, setting up for meetings, giving rides, talking with newcomers, making and receiving phone calls,

AFTERWARDS

If people come up to thank you, say “Thank you.” It is not your job to explain to them why they are wrong, just say “Thank you.”

If they say they got something from your talk, they might know better than you what is in their own head.

THE THREE TALKS

Almost all speakers say they had three talks:

- *The talk they planned and rehearsed to whatever level – **the talk they wanted to give;***
- *The talk they actually gave;*
- *The talk based on things they remembered after the meeting – what they think **they should have said.***

That is common. Like life, you do as well as you can and do it a little bit better next time. Do your best and learn. You can do it better the next time.

EMPTYING YOUR CUP

There is an old teaching story of a petitioner coming to see a monk for wisdom. The monk offered him a cup of tea and the petitioner held out a cup. The monk poured until the cup was full, then kept pouring until the cup overflowed and the tea spilled all over the floor.

When the teapot was empty, the monk shook his head and looked at the petitioner. He said:

“How can I give you any tea if you do not give me an empty cup?”

Speaking is your opportunity to empty your cup to get the next blessing or lesson.

A LIST

You may want to use an index card or a sheet of note paper to help you, should your mind go blank looking at the faces staring at you.

It can be very simple, just a few one or three word cues to remind you of what you intended to say.

Here is a sample of how one speaker might make such a list:

- Sobriety Date
- Home Group
- Mama dies
- Always the 'new' kid
- Confusion - my drinking problem separate from my dad's
- First AA meetings - uplifting stories
- Weak sponsors
- Two phony inventories, drank
- Rape and powerlessness
- Day 1
- Real Sponsor
- Real Inventory
- Going to Prisons
- Service
- Heart Surgery
- diabetes
- Losing Norma
- Today

12 Step Programs Directory

*Anon Family Group Inc.
1600 Corporate Landing Parkway
Virginia Beach, VA 23454-5617
757 563-1600
www.al-anon.alateen.org*

*All Addicts Anonymous (AAA)
40 Wickstead Way
Thornhill, Ont L3T 5E4
Canada
Tel: 416 657 7771
www.alladdictsanonymous.org*

*AA World Services, Inc.,
P.O. Box 459,
New York, NY 10163
(212) 870-3400
www.aa.org*

*Adult Children of Alcoholics WSO (ACA)
P.O.Box 3216
Torrance CA 90510 USA
562-595-7831
www.adultchildren.org*

*Cocaine Anonymous WSO (CA)
PO Box 492000
Los Angeles, CA 90049-8000
www.ca.org*

*Clutterers Anonymous World Service Organization
(CLA WSO)
PO Box 91413
Los Angeles, CA 90009-1413
(310) 281-6064
<http://sites.google.com/site/clutterersanonymous>*

*Crystal Meth Anonymous (CMA)
CMA General Services
4470 W Sunset Blvd Ste 107 PMB 555
Los Angeles CA 90027-6302
www.crystalmeth.org*

*Co-Dependents Anonymous Fellowship Services
Office (CoDA)
PO Box 33577
Phoenix, AZ 85067-3577
www.coda.org*

*Co-Anon Family Groups World Services
PO Box 12722
Tucson, AZ 85732-2722
520-513-5028
www.co-anon.org*

*COSA - Codependents of Sex Addicts
ISO of COSA
PO Box 79908
Houston TX 77279-9908
(866) 899-COSA (2672)
www.cosa-recovery.org*

*COSLAA - CoSex and Love Addicts Anonymous
Fellowship-Wide Services
1550 NE Loop 410, Ste 118
San Antonio, TX 78209
www.slaafws.org*

*Debtors Anonymous General Service Office (DA)
PO Box 920888
Needham, MA 02492-0009
Toll Free: 800-421-2383 - US Only
781-453-2743*

*Depressed Anonymous
PO Box 17414
Louisville, KY 40217*

*Dual Recovery Anonymous
World Network Central Office
P.O. Box 8107
Prairie Village, Kansas, 6620
www.draonline.org*

*Eating Addictions Anonymous (EAA)
General Service Office
PO Box 8151
Silver Spring, MD 20907-8151
(202) 882-6528
www.eatingaddictionsanonymous.org*

*Emotions Anonymous International (EA)
PO Box 4245, St. Paul MN 55104-0245
Phone: (651) 647-9712
www.emotionsanonymous.org/*

*Emotional Health Anonymous (EHA)
San Gabriel Valley Intergroup
P.O. Box 2081
San Gabriel, CA 91778
626/287-6260 PH*

*Families Anonymous (FA)
P O Box 3475
Culver City, CA 90231-3475
(800) 736-9805
www.FamiliesAnonymous.org*

*Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA)
400 W Cummings Park #1700
Woburn, MA 01801
781 931 6300
www.foodaddicts.org*

*Food Addicts Anonymous (FAA)
529 N W Prima Vista Blvd. #301 A
Port St. Lucie, FL 34983
561-967-3871*

*Gamblers Anonymous® (GA)
International Service Office
P.O. Box 17173
Los Angeles, CA 90017
(213) 386-8789
www.gamblersanonymous.org*

*Gam-Anon/Gam-A-Teen, for friends and family
members of problem gamblers
Gam-Anon® International
Service Office, Inc.
PO Box 157
Whitestone, NY 11357
718-352-1671
www.gam-anon.org*

*GreySheeters Anonymous (GSA)
www.graysheet.org*

*Methadone Anonymous (MA)
<http://methadonesupport.org/>*

Marijuana Anonymous World Services (MA)
P.O. Box 7807
Torrance, CA 90504
1-800-766-6779
www.marijuana-anonymous.org

Crystalmeth Anonymous (CMA)
General Services
4470 W Sunset Blvd Ste 107 PMB 555
Los Angeles CA 90027-6302
213.488.4455
www.crystalmeth.org

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)
PO Box 9999
Van Nuys, CA 91409
818.773.9999
www.na.org
NAIL - Neurotics Anonymous
See Emotions Anonymous

Nar-Anon, for friends and family members of addicts
Nar-Anon Family Group headquarters
22527 Crenshaw Blvd Suite 200B
Torrance, CA 90505
310.534.8188 or 800.477.6291
www.nar-anon.org

NicA - Nicotine Anonymous World Services
419 Main Street, PMB# 370
Huntington Beach, CA 92648
Toll Free: (877) 879-6422

Obsessive Compulsive Foundation
PO Box 961029
Boston, MA, 02196
617-973-5801
www.ocfoundation.org

PA - Pills Anonymous
pillanonymous.org

Overeaters Anonymous, Inc. (OA)
PO Box 44020
Rio Rancho, New Mexico 87174-4020 USA

On-Line Gamers Anonymous World Services (OLGA)
104 Miller Lane
Harrisburg, PA 17110
(612) 245-1115

Recoveries Anonymous Universal Services
Box 1212
East Northport, NY 11731

Recovering Couples Anonymous WSO Office (RCA)
P.O. Box 11029
Oakland, CA 94611
781-794-1456
www.recovering-couples.org

SA - Smokers Anonymous
See Nicotine Anonymous

SA - Sexaholics Anonymous
International Central Office
PO Box 3565
Brentwood, TN 37024
(615) 370-6062
www.sa.org

ISO of Sex Addicts Anonymous (SAA)
PO Box 70949
Houston, TX 77270 USA
1-713-869-4902
www.sexaa.org

Sexual Compulsives Anonymous (SCA)
P.O. Box 1585, Old Chelsea Station
New York, NY 10011

*SLAA - Sex and Love Addicts Anonymous
Fellowship-Wide Services
1550 NE Loop 410, Ste 118
San Antonio, TX 78209
www.slaafws.org*

*Spender's Anonymous
www.spenders.org*

*Survivors of Incest Anonymous (SIA)
World Service Office
P.O. Box 190
Benson, MD 21018-9998
410-893-3322*

*Workaholics Anonymous (WA)
World Service Organization
Post Office Box 289
Menlo Park, California 94026-0289 U.S.A.
Phone: (510) 273-9253
www.workaholics-anonymous.org*

*Homosexuals Anonymous Fellowship Services
16506 FM 529 Rd - 115 Box 113
Houston, TX 77095
www.ha-fs.org*

*Parents Anonymous (PA)
Parents Anonymous® Inc.
675 West Foothill Blvd., Suite 220
Claremont, CA 91711-3475
(909) 621-6184
www.parentsanonymous.org*

*Pagans In Recovery (PIR)
Non 12-Step program, online forum only*

*Schizophrenics Anonymous (SA)
Non 12-Step program, professional services*

If you are aware of other service offices for 12-Step programs, please forward the information for inclusion in the next edition of this directory.

anonymousreview@gmail.com

AA Book List

Conversion of Bill W By Dick B AA Historian
NEW Highly Recommended www.dickb.com

AA Master Inventory Dick B \$25 to Purchase
Read Free Online 2002 New Editions Available
soon

Turning Point AA Comprehensive History By
Dick B this Book covers all the bases. Oxford
Akron

Not God By Ernest Kurtz - -Highest
Recommendation!! was The history of AA by
Ernie K

Bill W by Robert Thomsen c.1975, Published by
Harper & Row

Bill W. (by Francis Hartigan)

AA comes of Age AA World Services

Slaying the Dragon- The History of Addiction
Treatment & Recovery (Bill White)

Dr Bob and the Good Old Timers AA World
Services

Language of the Heart AA World Services

My Search for Bill W. (by Mel B.) 2000 Hazelden

New Wine (by Mel B.) 1991 Hazelden

Ebby the Man who sponsored Bill Willson(by Mel
B.) 1998 Hazelden

Bill W. and Mr. Wilson (by Matthew J. Raphael a
pseudonym) Highly recommended!!

Bill W., My First 40 Years, an Autobiography by
the Cofounder of AA-Bill Pittman Hazleden
Publisher

My Name Is Bill: Bill Wilson--His Life and the
Creation of Alcoholics Anonymous Susan
Cheever 2006

The Roots of AA (Bill Pittman Hazelden)- was
OOP called AA Way It Began Highly
Recommended

Beware the 1st Drink!! The Washingtonian
Temperance society and AA - 1991 Blumberg
Pittman

Practice These Principles/What is Oxford Group
(Bill Pittman Hazelden)

Twelve Step Sponsorship : How It Works by
Hamilton B. (Hazelden)

The Soul of Sponsorship : The Friendship of Fr. Ed
Dowling -Bill Wilson by Robert Fitzgerald

The Steps We Took: A Shares His Experience,
Strength, and Hope by Joe McQ

The Spirituality of Imperfection by Ernest Kurtz,
Katherine Ketcham

Understanding the 12 Steps By Terrence T Gorski
Fireside/Parkside 1991

A Simple Program by J Big Book rewritten to
Modern Language

Alcoholics Anonymous Cult or Cure Charles Buffe
[click here](#) highly recommended

Courage To Change -Shoemaker (Bill Pittman and Dick B) (Hazelden)

Sister Ignatia: Angel of Alcoholics Anonymous (Mary Darrah Loyola Univ Press)

Mrs. Marty Mann : The First Lady of AA (Sally Brown Hazelden)

Women Pioneers in 12 Step Recovery by Charlotte Hunter

The Natural History of Alcoholism (Geo E Valiant)

Changed Lives: The Story of Alcoholics Anonymous Dennis C. Morreim / 1992

But, for the Grace of God ... ,by Wally P. Bishop of Books

Children of the Healer, the Story of Dr. Bob's Kids, Hazelden

Getting Better Inside Alcoholics Anonymous, by Nan Robertson, William Morrow

How It Worked, the Story of Clarence H. Snyder, by Mitchell K. Out of Print Read on Web

Getting Better Inside AA (Nan Robertson 1988) Thomas Congan Books

Physician, Heal Thyself!, by Dr. Earle M., CompCare Publishers

That Amazing Grace, by Dick B., Paradise Research Publications

There's More to Quitting Drinking than Quitting Drinking, by Dr. Paul O., Sabrina Pub.

Anne Smith's Journal (by Dick B)

Grateful to Have Been There by Nell Wing

Lois Remembers AA World Services

Motorcycle Hobos (Lois Wilson) Gratitude Press
This Book Was PULLED - Therefore Scarce!!!
email for details

The Lois Wilson Story -When Love Is Not Enough- written a by William G. Borchert 2005

The Higher Power of the Twelve-Step Program: For Believers & Non-believers, 2001, Glenn Chestnut

Changed by Grace: V. C. Kitchen, the Oxford Group, and AA, September 2006 Glenn Chestnut

Children of the Healer (Story- Dr. Bob's Kids) Sue Smith Windows

Pass It On - Bill Wilson and the AA Message, AA World Services

Dr. Bob and the Good Old Timers AA World Services

To Be Continued-AA World Bibliography (Charles Bishop Bill Pittman) Bishop Books OUT OF PRINT

The Collected Ernie Kurtz (Kurtz-Bishop of Books)

Silkworth: The Dr. Who Loved Drunks (Dale Mitchel-Hazleden 2002)

Road to Fellowship: Role of the Emmanuel Movement /Jacoby Club and AA 2004, Richard M. Dubiel,

AA Websites

hindfoot.org

silkworth.net

anonpress.org

aahistory.com

xa-speakers.org

164andmore.com

thejaywalker.com

sponsormagazine.org

anonymousreview.org

www.bigbookdictionary.com

barefootsworld.net/aahistory.html

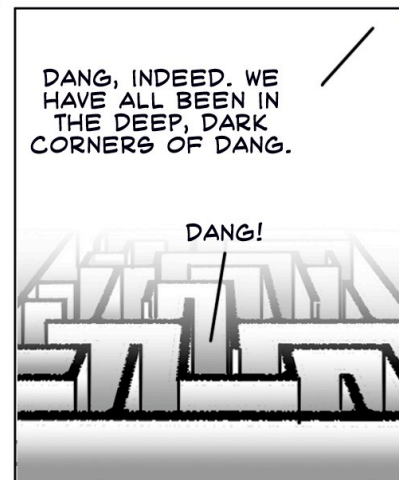
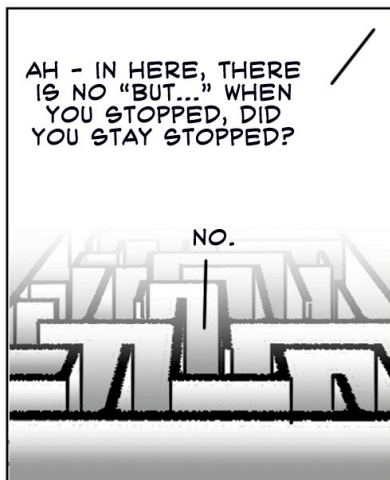
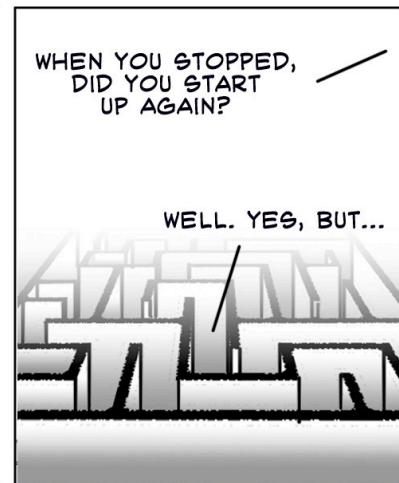
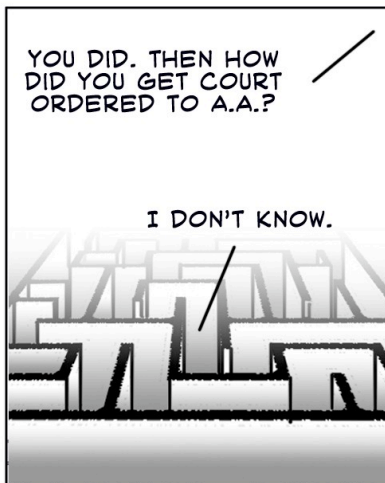
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MAZING RECOVERY

THE REAL QUESTION

BY JOE A.





A RECOVERY READER

A GUIDE FOR SPONSORS, STUDENTS & TEACHERS

**A COLLECTION OF WRITINGS ON 12-STEP RECOVERY
FROM THE 1940S TO THE 21ST CENTURY, INCLUDING:**

- THE FIRST BOOKLET ON AA SPONSORSHIP BY CLARENCE SNYDER (1944)
- ONE WAY GROUP INVENTORY GUIDE (1959)
- ESSAYS ON SPIRITUALITY, INVENTORY, AND LIVING IN RECOVERY
- ARTICLES AND INDEXES FROM:

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